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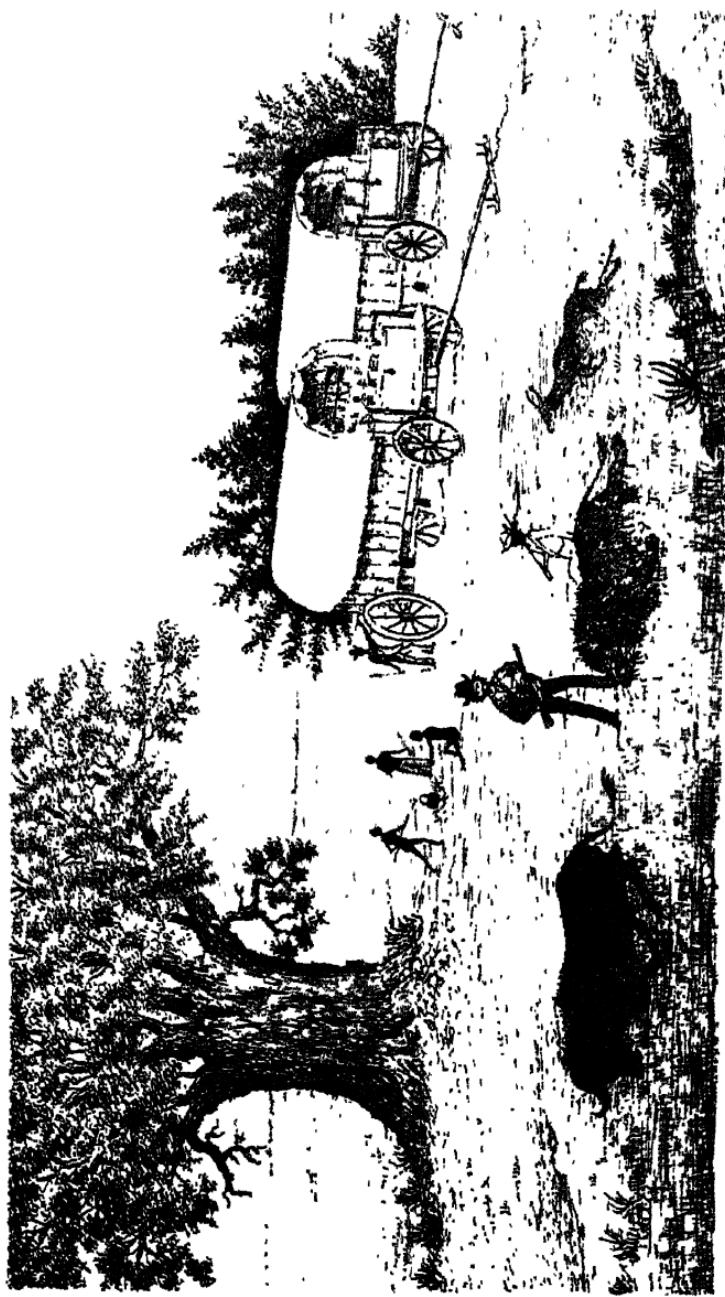




TWENTY-FIVE YEARS IN A  
WAGGON.

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A NIGHT'S BAG IN THE KALAHARA DESERT

# TWENTY-FIVE YEARS IN A WAGGON

IN THE

*GOLD REGIONS OF AFRICA.*

BY

ANDREW A. ANDERSON

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON—CHAPMAN AND HALL,

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1887.



## PREFACE.

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My object in writing this work is to add another page to the physical geography of Africa. That region selected for my explorations has hitherto been a *terra incognita* in all maps relating to this dark continent. The field of my labour has been South Central Africa, north of the Cape Colony, up to the Congo region, comprising an area of 2,000,000 square miles : in length, from north to south, 1100 miles, and from east to west—that is, from the Indian to the South Atlantic Ocean—1800 miles, which includes the whole of Africa from sea to sea, and from the 15° to the 30° south latitude.

It has been my desire to make physical geography a pleasant study to the young, and in gaining this knowledge of a country, they may at the same time become acquainted with its resources and capabilities for future enterprise in commercial pursuits to all who may embark in such undertakings, and this cannot be accomplished without having a full knowledge of the people who inhabit the land ; also its geological

features, natural history, botany, and other subjects of interest in connection with it. Such information is imperative to a commercial nation like Great Britain, particularly when we look round and see such immense competition in trade with our continental neighbours, necessitates corresponding energy at home if we wish to hold our own in the great markets of the world, and this cannot be done unless the resources and capabilities of every quarter of the globe are thoroughly known. And for this purpose my endeavours have been directed, so far as South Central Africa is concerned, and to fill up the blank in the physical geography of that portion of the African Continent.

When I undertook this work in 1863 no information could be obtained as to what was beyond our colonial frontier, except that a great part was desert land, uninhabited, except in parts by wild Bushmen, and the remaining region beyond by lawless tribes of natives. I at once saw there was a great field open for explorations, and I undertook that duty in that year, being strongly impressed with the importance, that eventually it would become (connected as it is with our South African possessions) of the highest value, if in our hands, for the preservation of our African colonies, the extension of our trade, and a great field for civilizing and Christianizing the native races, as also for emigration, which would lead to most important results, in opening up the great high road to Central

Africa, thereby securing to the Cape Colony and Natal a vast increase of trade and an immense opening for the disposal of British merchandize that would otherwise flow into other channels through foreign ports; and, at the same time, knowing how closely connected native territories were to our border, which must affect politically and socially the different nationalities that are so widely spread over all the southern portion of Africa. With these advantages to be attained, it was necessary that some step should be taken to explore these regions, open up the country, and correctly delineate its physical features, and, if time permitted, its geological formation also, and such other information that could be collected from time to time as I proceeded on my work. Such a vast extent of country, containing 2,000,000 square miles, cannot be thoroughly explored single-handed under many years' labour, neither can such an extensive area be properly or intelligibly described as a whole. I have, therefore, in the first place, before entering upon general subjects, deemed it advisable to describe the several river systems and their basins in connection with the watersheds, as it will greatly facilitate and make more explicit the description given as to the locality of native territories that occupy this interesting and valuable portion of the African continent, in relation to our South African colonies. And, secondly, to describe separately each native state, the latitude

and longitude of places, distances, and altitudes above sea-level, and including those subjects above referred to. All this may be considered dry reading. I have therefore introduced many incidents that occurred during my travels through the country from time to time. To have enlarged on personal events, such as hunting expeditions, which were of daily occurrence, would have extended this work to an unusual length, therefore I have taken extracts from my journals to make the work, I trust, more interesting, as well as giving the information I have been so many years in obtaining, and at the same time make physical geography a pleasant study to the young, who may wish to make themselves acquainted with every part of the globe. This is the first and most important study to all who are entering into commercial pursuits, for without this knowledge little can be done in extending our commerce to all parts of the world.

*October, 1887.*

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# TWENTY-FIVE YEARS IN A WAGGON.

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## CHAPTER I.

### NATAL.

In Natal—Preparing for my long-promised explorations into the far interior.

As a colonial, previous to 1860, I had long contemplated making an expedition into the regions north of the Cape Colony and Natal, but not until that year was I able to devote my time, or see my way clear, to accomplish it. At that time, 1860, the Cape Colony was not so well known as it is now, and Natal much less; more particularly beyond its northern boundary, over the Drakensberg mountains, for few besides the Boers had ever penetrated beyond the Free State and Transvaal; and when on their return journey to Maritzburg, to sell their skins and other native produce, I had frequent conversations with them, the result was that nothing was known of the country beyond their limited journeys. This naturally gave

me a greater desire to visit the native territories, and, being young and full of energy, wishing for a more active life than farming, although that is active during some part of the year, I arranged my plans and made up my mind to visit these unknown regions, and avail myself of such opportunities as I could spare from time to time to go and explore the interior, and collect such information as might come within my reach, not only for self-gratification, but to obtain a general knowledge of the country that might eventually be of use to others, and so combine pleasure with profit, to pay the necessary expenses of each journey. Such were my thoughts at the time, and if I could make what little knowledge I possessed available in pursuing this course, my journeys would not be wasted. My plans at first were very vague, but, eventually, as I proceeded they became more matured, and, having a thorough knowledge of colonial life and what was necessary to be done to carry out my wishes, I had little difficulty in getting my things in order. Geology was one of my weaknesses, also natural history, which were not forgotten in my preparations. The difficulty was, there were no maps to guide me in the course to take over this wide and unknown region; I therefore determined to add that work also to my duties, and make this a book of reference on the Geography of South Central Africa, and so complete as I went on such parts visited, as

time and opportunities permitted, as also a general description of the country, the inhabitants, botany, and other subjects, and incidents that took place on my travels through this interesting and important part of the African continent, and, at the same time, cool down a little of the superabundant Scotch blood that would not let me settle down to a quiet life when there was anything to be done that required action ; for we know perfectly well before we enter upon these explorations, that we shall not be living in the lap of luxury, or escape from all the perils that beset a traveller when first entering upon unknown ground —if any of these troubles should enter his mind, he had better stay at home. But, at the same time, it will be necessary to give some idea what an explorer has to undergo in penetrating these regions, and also the pleasures to be derived therefrom.

“ There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,  
    There is a rapture by the lonely shore,  
There is society where none intrudes  
    By the deep sea, and music in its roar.”

*Byron.*

It is a pleasure to be able to ramble unfettered by worldly ambition over a wild and new country, far from civilization, where the postman’s knock is never heard, or shrieking railway whistles, startling the seven senses out of your poor bewildered brain, and other so-called civilizing influences, keeping up a perpetual

nervous excitement not conducive to health. A life in the desert is certainly most charming with all its drawbacks, where the mind can have unlimited action. To travel when you please, eat and drink when so inclined, hunt, fish, sketch, explore, read or sleep, as the case may be, without interruption; no laws to curb your actions, or conventional habits to be studied. This is freedom, liberty, independence, in the full sense of the word. With these dreamy thoughts constantly before me, I determined to give such a life a trial; consequently, without more ado, I set to work to provide myself with the necessary means. Having heard, when travelling through Natal, that the country a few miles beyond the Drakensberg mountains was a *terra incognita*, where game could be counted by the million, and the native tribes beyond lived in primitive innocence, I was charmed with the thought of being the first in the field to enjoy Nature in all its forms, and bring before me, face to face, a people whose habits, customs, and daily life were the same to-day they were five thousand years ago. What a lesson for man. With what greed I looked upon my probable isolation from the outer world; craving for this visit to the happy hunting-ground.

The first thing to be done was to apply to an old friend, living a short distance from Maritzburg on a farm, who had been on several hunting expeditions, and returned a few weeks before, with his waggon-

load of skins of various animals he had shot with his and his sons' guns, which he spread out before me—one hundred and five—six lions, four leopards, seven otters, eight wolves, fourteen tiger cats; the remainder made up of gnu, spring- and blesbok, and a variety of other antelopes, all shot within one hundred miles from the northern and western border of Natal, over the Drakensberg mountains, besides a heap of ostrich feathers of various kinds—a goodly bag of a seven months' trip. The result of my cogitations with him was the procuring of a waggon and fourteen trek oxen, with the usual gear—a horse, saddle and bridle, with all sorts of odds and ends for cooking, water-casks, food of all kinds, flour, biscuits, bread, mealies for the Kaffirs, tea, coffee, sugar, preserves, and other necessaries needed for the road. A safe driver and forelooper, and an extra boy to cook and look after the horse, besides three rifles (not breechloaders, they were not known in Natal in 1860) and a double-barrel Westley Richards, and any quantity of ammunition. These three boys were all Zulus, with good characters, therefore could be depended on, which is a great thing.

Being a "Colonial" I was well up to African life and the Zulu language—a great advantage in that country. All things provided, I took several trips round the country in my waggon, up to August 1863, when I started north.

*Twenty-five years ago!—a quarter of a century!* What changes have come over South Africa in that time! Natal was little known and scarcely heard of in England. The white population did not exceed one half its present number of 30,000, and the greater part was overrun by Kaffirs, who were Zulus, similar to those of Zululand. Game of various kinds in plenty, lions were common, elephants, buffaloes, elands, wildebeests, quagga, and other antelopes, were numerous on the plains and long flats; leopards—here called tigers—wolves, jackals, and other beasts of prey, were heard nightly in the bush; and in the open rolling plains, under the Drakensberg range of mountains, that flank the western and northern boundary of the colony, spring- and blesbok, quagga and the gnu could be counted in thousands. Where are they now? Cleared from the face of the earth by the rifle, so that scarcely one is left, and those preserved that they should not be entirely exterminated. Beyond that magnificent and grand mountain-range that rises in parts ten thousand feet above the sea-level, and extending several hundred miles in length, rearing its noble head far up in the clouds, and looking down as if guarding the beautiful and peaceful Natal at its feet. The scenery, especially on the western side, taking in the Giant and Champagne Castle and the lofty peaks to the north, few landscapes on earth can compare with

it. Here the wild Bushmen lived in all their pristine glory ; their home—the caves and kloofs in the gorges of mountains — far away from any other tribe, living by their poisoned arrows on game that comes within bow-shot, and upon fruits and roots, which will be more particularly described in another chapter. Where are they now ? Much like the game, exterminated by the rifle. They were then a great pest to the colonial people who kept stock near the foot of the mountain, for they would come down, after watching for days, mounted or on foot, and steal the cattle, killing all they could not carry off.

*BUSHMEN.*

These Bushmen are a degraded race of Hottentots dwindled in size to dwarfs by semi-starvation in the hills, and by breeding in and in. They much resemble the little Bushmen in the hills of India, both in appearance and habits, but they are more intelligent, using deadly poisoned arrows and living in caves ; which the Indians do not,—merely putting up a screen or break-wind where they stop. In these caves in Natal there are extremely interesting coloured pictures of animals, hunts, &c., which have been copied and sent home to the British Museum, I think by Captain Allison, border agent, in Natal.

Some have supposed that these were the fore-

fathers of the Hottentot race, but it is quite clear that they were merely Hottentots driven into the hills. A curious confirmation of this view occurs in the case of some horses in Tasmania which retreated into the mountains, became wild and dwindled down to very small ponies. Major Erskine rode down, and after a terrible ride caught one, which used to carry children, but bucked off all grown people.

These Bushmen became such a pest that it was necessary to hunt them down. Two forces of a dozen men or more each were sent out under Captains Allison and Giles, and they got on their spoor after they had stolen a number of fine English-bred cattle and horses, many of which when they first escaped to the hills were found killed, when unable to keep up.

They tracked these Bushmen about on the hills in snow for some days, and at last the two parties met, and just before dark saw the Bushmen's fires in caves. The parties slept on the ground and in the morning saw a Bushman come out with a bridle to catch a horse. Suddenly, like Robinson Crusoe, he stood aghast seeing their spoor, threw down his bridle, and bolted to give the alarm. The Bushmen fought with their poisoned arrows, and not being able to distinguish the sexes in the bush as they dress alike, all were killed, except one old woman, shot through the knee, who rode in as if nothing was wrong with her. She

was cured, carried near to another tribe and turned out. No Bushmen were ever seen after that in Natal; they were sixteen in number. Previously one lad was shot through the shoulder and caught. He was never of any service, not even as an after rider, though a splendid horseman, being quite unteachable. He never attempted to escape to his tribe, though he might easily have done so; and when taken out to track them, and coming on their caves, he broke their pots, a sign of displeasure among Kaffirs; and he said all he wanted was, to catch and kill his mother.

## STARTING.

Before starting on my memorable expedition, I procured some sail-cloth, to make a side-tent to my waggon, which formed a very comfortable retreat for my boys on wet nights. My driver, a fine young Zulu, could handle an ox-whip and give the professional crack to perfection. If not able to accomplish this feat, they are not considered efficient drivers. His name was Panda, after the great Zulu chief, and he was from all accounts a descendant of that renowned warrior, his father having fled into Natal some time before. He was now working to collect a sufficient number of heifers together to buy his first wife, a young Zulu maid living in a large kraal half a mile from his master's farm. The foreloper, one who

leads the two front oxen in dangerous places, and looks after the span when in the Veldt feeding and assists in inspanning, another fine young Zulu about eighteen, a handsome lad, was named Shilling. The other and third boy, younger, also a Zulu, I named Jim, as his other name was too long to use or recollect. After seeing some of my friends and saying good-bye, we make the first afternoon trek over the Town hill towards Howick, a very steep and stony road, full of ruts made by the heavy rains, and out on the rising ground beyond; where a magnificent view is obtained of the surrounding country and distant hills, of which Table Mountain, some twenty miles on the east of the city, stands out boldly in the landscape. There are several table mountains in Natal, so called from their flat heads. My object when I commenced this journey, was to push on with all speed to the foot of the Drakensberg Mountains, a distance of over 100 miles, across the Berg at Van Reenen's Pass, and make for Harrysmith in the Orange Free State, then determine where I should commence my journey of exploration. But I did not reach the foot of the mountain until the 12th of September, 1863, having deviated from the main transport-road to visit some farmer friends, and take up one of the sons of an old "Colonial," who had lived many years in the country as a stock farmer, and who offered me his son as a guide, he being well acquainted with the country and

people I proposed visiting. As he was a good driver and a good shot, as all colonials are, I was pleased to have his company, and being young, only seventeen, just the age to enjoy a rough and ready kind of life, it suited me exactly, so John Talbot was added to my little family. This detained me six days; as his mother wished to bake some biscuits for the road, also bread, and get some butter and other good things, I was quite agreeable to stay and go out with the old man to look up some game also, to supply my larder. So whilst the mother and her pretty daughter of true English blood, a year older than her brother John, were busy in the house, we men were also busy outside with our guns; besides large game, such as elands, koodoo, bles- and springbok, we had excellent sport with the shot-guns, there being plenty of hares, partridges, pheasants, snipes, and ducks. The farm being situated on the Tugela river, and some two miles from the foot of some of the spurs of the mountain, was out of the way of all traffic, and as pretty a locality as any one could desire to live in, any quantity of fish, consequently there was no lack of fish, flesh, or fowl, in this beautiful and quiet retreat.

The second morning of my arrival there, Mr. Talbot and I, after taking coffee, for be it known, no one thinks of going out before taking a cup or two, saddled up, as the sun was just peeping over the distant mountain-tops in a blaze of gold and crimson

light, with an atmosphere pure and clear, casting a brilliant reflection on all around,—a glorious sight to behold. This part of the world is famed for the lovely and varied tints which the sun produces in the sky in rising and setting, more particularly in the summer, forming celestial landscapes, marvellous to look upon, and grand in the extreme. On leaving the farm-house for our ride into the open plains to see if we could discover some elands, we met a Dutchman on horseback, with the usual companion rifle. After the morning greeting and shaking hands, he inquired if we had seen any stray calves about ; finding we had not, he suspected the Bushmen had been down again from the mountains and had carried off two. He informed us a neighbour of his, another Dutch farmer, a week or so before had lost some sheep, and he had traced them up into a deep kloof of the mountain, and came upon a family of Bushmen in the act of driving three of his sheep towards the hills, where he shot the two men and took a woman and two children, and brought them to his farm, making them drive the sheep back with them, and they were at his farm now.

Wishing to see them, we rode over, a distance of some seven miles, where we found them confined in an outhouse, squatting on the floor, looking anything but amiable; they were poor specimens of humanity. We had them brought out for a closer inspection.

The woman was not old or young, of a yellowish white colour, a few little tufts of wool on the head; eyes she had, but the lids were so closed they were not to be seen, although she could see between them perfectly; no nose, only two orifices, through which she breathed, with thin projecting lips, and sharp chin, with broad cheek-bones, her spine curved in a most extraordinary manner, consequently the stomach protruded in the same proportion, with thin calfless legs, and with that wonderful formation peculiar to these Bushmen tribes, and slightly developed in the Hottentot and Korannas, from which they have partly sprung. The two little girls, the eldest did not seem more than ten or twelve, were of the same type, the woman measured four feet one inch in height. The old Boer wanted to shoot them, but his vrouw wished to keep them and make servants of them. Their language was a succession of clicks with no guttural sound in the throat, like the two other tribes named, but both languages assimilated so closely that it is clear the Hottentot and Koranna have partly descended from this pure breed, for a pure breed they are, and may be the remnants of almost a distinct race that lived on the face of this earth in prehistoric ages.

The quarter of the globe in which they are found, at the extreme end of a large continent, in a rugged and mountainous country, a locality well adapted to

preserve them from utter extinction, may be the cause of their preservation ; at any rate, there are no other people in the world like them, except those Indians before mentioned, and their having a language almost without words except clicks, is a most peculiar feature in connection with this entirely distinct race, and for anthropological science, these people should be preserved, that is the pure breed, unmixed by Hottentot or Koranna blood. Leaving the Boer farm, after the usual cup of coffee, we skirted the hills which ran out in grand and lofty spurs, broken here and there by perpendicular cliffs, many hundred feet deep, clothed with subtropical plants and shrubs, with beautiful creepers climbing among the projecting rocks, and hanging in festoons, with crimson and yellow pods, contrasting so beautifully with the rich green around.

We reached the head of one of the Tugela branches, one of the most picturesque and lovely landscapes I have ever seen in Africa. The lofty mountain range, 10,000 feet in altitude, forming the background, with their peaked and rugged summits, fading away in the distance to a pale bluish pink tint, with the nearer mountains, and a glimpse of a pretty waterfall, with the richly-wooded foreground and placid stream at our feet completed a picture seldom to be seen. My friend and host, Mr. Talbot, proposed a halt at this spot, selecting a fine clump of trees to be in the

shade, for although early in the spring, the sun shining down upon us from a cloudless sky, was unusually warm; we were therefore glad to seek the shelter of the trees, off-saddle and knee-halter the horses to feed, whilst we stretched ourselves on the soft young grass to view the scene around and take our lunch.

As it was early in the day, we gave the horses a good rest, and then saddled-up for our return journey. There were many small herds of various kinds of antelopes, but too far away to follow. Springboks we could shoot, but being so many miles from the farm, we waited until we got within a reasonable distance to carry them on the horses, which as we approached home we had plenty of opportunities of doing, and secured three, two of which I made into biltong for the road. On arriving at the farm, my boy Panda showed me a large snake, one of those cobra de capello whose bite is very dangerous, sometimes causing death; it measured five feet in length, and was killed in the house, which was built with poles and reeds, called in the country a harte-brest house, with several outbuildings on the same plan. They are made very comfortable and snug within, but insecure to keep out snakes; most of the cooking is done out of doors, where a fire is constantly burning: early coffee about six, breakfast at eight, dinner at one, and supper at sundown. This is

the general custom on the farms. After an outing of nearly twenty miles, we enjoyed our dinner of baked venison of eland, with stewed peaches to follow, and good home-baked bread. As lions were very plentiful, as also wolves and leopards, the farmers had to make secure kraals for their cattle, sheep, and goats; the horses were kept in sheds; and with these precautions it not unfrequently occurred that a leopard, which out here is called a tiger, leaped the enclosure and carried off a goat or sheep. A few weeks before my arrival here, some wolves and hyenas broke into the sheep-kraal, killing seven, carrying three half a mile away, where their remains were found next morning. They make these attacks mostly on dark and stormy nights, when it is difficult to hear any noise when shut in the house.

The next day my host, his son John, and myself, after breakfast saddled-up, and with our rifles, started for the native location, which is an extensive tract of country under the foot of the Berg, occupied by the Zulus, who have large kraals and plenty of cattle, in order to buy some young bullocks to break in for trek oxen. Visiting some on our way, at one of which we off-saddled to rest, the Kaffirs coming out to stare as usual, the young intombes (Kaffre maids), like their white sisters, curious to see the strangers, came out. John and his father being well-known to them, we were asked in to have some kaffir beer. Some

of the girls were very pretty, and we told them so, which they took as a matter of course, and came forward that we might have a better look at them, and seemed pleased to be admired.

Beautifully formed, with expressive countenances, tall, and carrying themselves as well as if they had been drilled under a professional; their constant habit of carrying heavy Kaffre pots of water, which can only be done by walking erect, has produced this effect. One young Kaffir was very busy making a hut for himself, as he was going to be married. The care and attention he displayed on its erection, and the ingenuity with which he intertwined each green stick, which was tied with thin slips of skin, was most interesting, and he seemed quite proud when praised for his good workmanship. One of the girls was pointed out to us as his wife that was to be, a fine good-looking girl about seventeen, ornamented with plenty of brass bracelets and beads, the present of her *fiancé*. They are not encumbered with much clothing, being in a state of nature with the exception of an apology for an apron, or frequently only a string of beads, two or three inches long. Their huts and enclosures are kept clean and neat, and in every respect as far as order and quietness are concerned, the Zulus may set an example to many white towns. After purchasing a few Kaffre sheep, we returned to the farm.

The 3rd of September, a lovely bright morning, two beautiful secretary-birds came walking close past the farm,—they are preserved for the good they do in killing snakes, therefore a heavy fine is set upon any one shooting them; they are similar in shape to the crane, but much larger, with long and powerful legs. It is strange to see them kill a snake, one would think that with their strong horny legs and beaks, they need only tread on him and kill him with their beaks, but they are evidently afraid to do this. They dart into the air and pound down violently upon him with their feet until he is dead.

Shortly after breakfast, a Zulu girl came for work; she had run away from her father's kraal, to escape being married to an old Zulu Induna, living on the Bushman river, and had walked nearly forty miles across the country to Mrs. Talbot's to escape the match. She told, when pressed, that her father wanted to sell her for twenty heifers to the old man, and she did not like it, as she liked a young Zulu, therefore she fled from the kraal the previous day, and had walked that distance without food, avoiding other kraals, fearing the people, if they saw her, would send her back, and she begged the "misses" would let her stop and work for her. She is a very fine young girl, apparently about seventeen, tall, and well made, and very good-looking, without ornaments or anything on her in the way of clothes. The "misses"

soon found an old garment to cover her nakedness ; poor girl, she is not devoid of affection as this action of hers shows. I fear there are many similarly situated, both white and black. So Mrs. Talbot had compassion and employed her, and she turned out a very good and useful help. The Zulu war was caused by a similar occurrence, two girls having taken refuge in Natal, whence they were fetched out and killed by the Zulus, who refused to give up the murderers.

Some few days after, we were all sitting under the shade of the trees close to the house, taking coffee, when four young Zulu girls came, each carrying a bowl on her head, full of maize, to exchange for beads and brass wire to make bracelets, as all outlying farmers keep such things for payment. Their ages might be about fifteen. One of them had her woolly hair in long ringlets all over her head, and seemed to be a born flirt, her manner was so coquettish ; all of them were very good-looking, as most of them are when young.

I told them if they would give us a dance, I would present each with a kerchief. This gave much satisfaction, and they commenced their Zulu dances, singing, laughing, and playing tricks, in their native way. When it was over the kerchiefs were given, which they fastened turban fashion round their heads, then marched up and down, much pleased with their appearance, showing they are not devoid of vanity.

Savage or civilized, woman is woman all over the world. Most of the Kaffirs living in Natal belong to the Amalimga Zulus, those in Zululand to the Ama-zulu family. Sixty years ago there were cannibals in Natal, in the mountains. I was shown the spot and tree, by an old Zulu, where the last man was cooked and eaten. This is very rare, however ; almost unknown. At that time the country was infested with hordes of wild Bushmen, of the type before described, who had their stronghold in those grand old mountains that skirt the northern and western boundary of this fair and beautiful little colony—the cannibals were not Bushmen ; and also with wandering tribes of the Amagalekas, Amabaces, Amapondas, many of them travelling west, and who settled on the Unzimvobo river, and along the coast in Tambookie and other districts, and remained in a wild and savage state up to within thirty years of the present time ; then it was a howling wilderness, swarming with lions, leopards, wolves, and other beasts of prey ; only a few years ago lions were very numerous. The landlord of the Royal Hotel at Durban told me a lion came into his yard in the daytime, leaped into an open window and seized upon a fine hot sirloin of beef that was on the table with other good things prepared for a dinner-party, and quietly walked off with it. At the present time (1860) up in these parts they are to be seen daily, and great care is required to preserve the oxen an

other animals from falling a prey to their nightly visits. Only three weeks back a farmer on the Tugela had one of his horses killed and partly eaten before morning. He was made fast in a shed, a short distance from the house; it appears there were several lions from the number of footprints to be seen in the morning. The Kaffirs forgot to fasten the door at night. Almost every evening we hear them.

#### A LION IN A DOG-CART.

As an instance of their boldness at times, for, generally speaking, they are cowardly, the following was related to the editor by Mr. Botha, a respectable, educated Boer farmer, and is quite true. It happened to his uncle.

“*Journal*.—Apes river, between Pretoria and Waterborg. Arrived at the Outspan, remained until next night at twelve, then started the waggon off on the springbok flats (twenty miles without water). The party consisted of L. Botha, P. Venter, and the servants, one waggon with span of sixteen oxen, one cart and two horses. Venter and Botha remained at the Outspan place with the cart and horses and a bastard Hottentot boy called Mark, twelve years old.

“The waggon had been gone half-an-hour when they heard the rattling of wheels in a manner which made them think that the oxen must have had a ‘scrick’

(scare) from a lion, as that place is full of them. Mark, who was sleeping alongside the fire, was called up to bring the horses. The lazy fellows there won't do anything themselves, not even when there is a 'scrick' from a lion. They were soon going to render assistance to the waggon, going at a jog trot (even then they did not hurry), when Mark, who was on the front seat, called out, 'Baas, de esel byt de paarde' ('The donkey bites the horse'), and immediately the cart stopped, and a lion was seen clasped round the fore-quarter of the favourite horse. Before the gun was taken up, down went the horse; meanwhile the gun was levelled at the lion, but the cap missed. Another was searched for, but it would not fit, as it was small and the nipple a large military one (so like a Boer!). The lion now was making his meal off the horse, lying at his ease alongside the splash-board, eating the hind-quarter, Botha trying to split a cap to make it fit in vain; so Venter took the gun, and Botha made up powder with spittle to make it stick, and Venter was to take aim and Botha to do the firing with a match. Just as it ignited, the lion sprang right into the cart between them, and gave Venter a wound on the head and scratched his hand with his claw, and bit off a piece of the railing, sending the gun and Mark spinning out of the cart, and with that force that the lion fell down behind the cart. He then came round, as fast

as he could, on to the dead horse, and continued his feed ; but not in the same cool manner, but making a growling, like a cat with meat when a dog is near, and now and then giving an awful roar, which made the cart, men, and all shake again. The other horse, which is a miracle, stood quite still, never attempting to budge an inch. After the lion had fed he went away, and Botha got out, intending to unharness the remaining horse, but no sooner was he on the ground than he heard the lion coming on again at full speed. He threw himself into the cart, and the lion stopped in front of the living horse, which tried to escape but was held fast by the pole-chain after breaking the swingle-trees. The lion gave one jump on to the horse and with one bite behind the ears killed him. Botha was lying on the front seat, with his legs hanging down alongside the splash-board, when the lion came and licked the sweat of his horse off his trousers, but did not bite, Botha remaining quite still, which was the only chance, in the dog-cart from ten o'clock, when first attacked, until near daybreak, when the lion left; you may imagine what Botha felt as he looked at his two valuable hunters. Soon a waggon came along and took on the cart, when their driver told them that, soon after he left, suddenly the oxen bolted for some distance, but luckily in the track, by the driver cracking his whip on both sides of them, which, no doubt, kept off the lion also, who was galloping alongside."

This is a most remarkable case of boldness in a lion, when not wounded.

The South African lions are not nearly so fierce and plucky as the Syrian, and they are often very cowardly. A Hottentot relates that he once came on a lion asleep, and put his elephant "roer" at his ear, when before he fired, he heard klop ! klop ! and the bullet, which had been secured only by a loose paper wad, rolled down and dropped into the lion's ear, who jumped up and bolted !

There are a few herds of buffaloes in the Bush, but they are very wild and dangerous to approach, having been so much hunted. I have seen them tamed and inspanned with oxen. Elephants are seen no more in Natal. The Berea, near Durban, which is an extensive Bush country, was a favourite resort for them, and the hippopotamus is becoming extinct in the rivers. There are five preserved in the Umgeni river near Durban, on a sugar estate ; one had disappeared for some time, and then came back with a calf. This "Hero" must have swum 100 miles by sea into the Zulu country after her Leander. There are also a few in the Upper Umgeni, near Maritzburg. I have been told by many Zulus that they have seen them leave a river, go out to sea and follow the coast down until they arrive at another river and enter it, and some of the old settlers have confirmed it.

The coast is much more tropical than the up-country. Plants, such as guava, citron, lime, tamarind, loquat,

lemon, orange, banana, pine-apple, figs, grow to perfection. In the uplands also peaches, apples, and almost every kind of European fruit and vegetables. The coast is favourable for sugar, tea, coffee, tobacco, indigo, arrowroot, ginger, all kinds of spices, and the cotton plant has just been introduced on the coast, but it failed, owing to the aphis fly; the castor-oil plant and the aloe grow to a great size. There is also some very fine timber, particularly in the kloofs amongst the hills. Coal, in seams eleven feet thick, exists in the Newcastle district, as the name denotes. Iron abounds all over the colony. Altogether, Natal is a very pleasant colony to settle in; the climate is everything that can be wished. The two principal drawbacks are the annual grass-fires, destroying everything as they sweep over the country, killing all young forest-trees, and making the grass of a coarser texture; and there are sometimes many months of drought. But these are not confined to Natal; the same drawbacks pervade every part of South Africa, even up to the Zambesi, and the long drought that lasts for months is more common towards the western portion of the continent than it is on the east coast. The summer being the rainy season makes it pleasant, though the lightning is terrible, and dangerous to a degree which, perhaps, does not exist anywhere else. The most dangerous are the dry storms.

## CHAPTER II.

My first start across the Drakensberg Mountains—Visit Harrysmith, Wakkerstroom, Utrich, Newcastle, Home.

EARLY in the morning of the fourth found me ready for a start for a four months' trip before plunging into the unknown land. My little expedition consisted of a waggon and fourteen trek oxen, a young four-year-old Natal horse, my driver and two Zulu boys, myself and young Talbot, well provisioned for my journey. Leaving my kind friends, I took the road to Lady-smith, but turned off to the left before reaching that town, and took the Transport-Road, leading to Harrysmith in the Free State, over the mountain, passing up by Van Reenen's Pass, a very steep and long hill, the altitude being 7250 feet above sea-level, and arrived at Harrysmith on the 18th of September, 1863, where I outspanned close to the town. The country along the whole distance up to the berg is very pretty and picturesque. From the base of the berg to the summit the distance is about five miles, with a rise of 2000 feet, that being the difference in

the altitude between the upper or northern part of Natal and the Orange Free State, consequently the latter being so much higher and open, makes the winter much colder. From this elevation, and looking back upon Natal, a more lovely or extensive landscape can scarcely be imagined. To the right and left huge rocks stand out on the rugged summits in those grotesque forms from which descend perpendicular cliffs and deep kloofs clothed in subtropical vegetation, between which long spurs of the mountain are thrown out, terminating in rolling plains and beyond lofty hills and deep valleys. Far away, on the right, continues the Drakensberg, with its lofty and noble peaks rearing their heads far into the clouds that hang on their summits in loving embrace, until they are lost to view in the pale tints of the evening sky, leaving the central view open to the sea, 120 miles to the coast, where the bluff at Port Durban can be distinguished overlooking the intervening country with its plains and hills.

It was here, at the Bushman's Pass, 9000 feet high, that the sad affair with Langalibalele's tribe occurred. A number of them had been at the diamond-fields, where they had procured guns for wages. No Kaffirs in Natal are allowed to have guns, except a few hundred, by special licence, and the sale of gunpowder is all in the hands of the Government, white men even not being allowed more than ten

pounds a year, and they cannot import guns without a special permission from the Government.

The entire immunity of Natal, from its first annexation from Kaffir wars, which have caused so much waste of blood and treasure at the Cape, is owing chiefly to this wise law, which is so rigidly enforced that a number of guns were seized which had been made in Natal, at a cost of 2*l.* 10*s.* each. The barrels were gas-pipes, whilst good muskets could have been imported at 5*s.* each. All the Cape wars have been caused by the omission of this simple precaution.

The Natal border Zulu chief Langalibalele had been a rebel from his youth upwards. He rebelled against Panda, the Zulu king, and barely escaped into Natal with a few followers, leaving all his cattle behind. Shortly after he returned, killed the keepers of the cattle, and took them into Natal. There he was given about the best "location" on the beautiful spot here described in the Drakensberg. Many refugees from Zululand joined him; and his tribe became powerful. But they were always restless and contumacious. At last about 250 of them brought back from the diamond-fields the guns which they had received for wages, and when called upon to give them up refused to do so, or even—as subsequently allowed—to send them in to be registered, and they insulted the messengers sent by the Government. A force was consequently marched into the location, and as the

whole tribe was about to depart into the Zulu country with the cattle, a proceeding which was against all Kaffir law, the passes of the mountains were occupied, to prevent their escape, by volunteers, and the soldiers were kept below. To the Bushman's Pass a force of about twenty of the Natal carbineers (cavalry) was sent up. The pass, 9000 feet high, was so steep that they could not ride, but had to lead their horses, in doing which Colonel Durnford (killed at Isandhlwana), who commanded the party, was pulled down a rock by his horse, and his shoulder dislocated. It was pulled in at once, but being a delicate man the pain and fatigue overcame him entirely, and he was obliged to remain behind, while the rest went on and bivouacked on the pass. During the night, young Robert Erskine, son of the Colonial Secretary (the editor), went down twice to his assistance, taking brandy, &c., and eventually he got him on to his horse and up to his men. Early next morning a part of the tribe, with the cattle, came up, the rest having passed before, and occupied the rocks around, being armed with guns.

Unfortunately, the Governor of Natal had got it into his head that he was a born soldier, and had accompanied the soldiers who were below. As the captain of the volunteers knew no drill, and could not move the men, the Governor—who was weakly allowed by the colonel in command to dictate—sent Major

Durnford, an engineer—who knew no more than the captain about manœuvring men—in command, and to this folly added a mad injunction “not to fire first!” in obedience to which Durnford allowed the tribe to keep coming up. Erskine, who had been private secretary to the former governor, and who knew the tribe well, having lived among them sketching, and having had twenty-five of them working for him at the diamond-fields, offered to go down the pass and remonstrate with the chiefs who were below. Major Durnford would not allow it, saying that he had saved his life, and it was certain death. The tribe kept coming up and lining the rocks, calling out, “You’ll never see your mother again! That’s my horse! That’s my saddle!” &c.

At last a cowardly fellow, a drill-sergeant, formerly in the Cape Mounted Rifles, who had been allowed to join the force as dry-nurse, persuaded the men that they would all be killed, and they sent their captain to Durnford to say so, and that as he would not allow them to fire they would not stay. On which Durnford called out, “Will nobody stand by me?” when Erskine said, “I will, major,” and another, Bond, said so, as also did one more. Durnford then said, “If you will not stand by me you must go;” and not knowing the cavalry word, the drill-sergeant gave the word, “Fours right! right wheel! Walk!

March!" As they filed past the rocks, the Zulu in command called, "Don't fire until they have passed;" and they then fired and shot down the whole rear section, and the rest galloped off, except Durnford, who was drinking at the source of the Orange river. His bridle was seized by two Zulus, and one wounded him in the shoulder. Although one arm was disabled, with the other he shot them both, and escaped.

At the same time the Kaffir interpreter, who fought gallantly, was killed, and Erskine also, whose horse was shot down, was shot through the head and heart, in the source of the Orange river. One of the four, whose horse had been shot down, caught Erskine's horse, which had got up again, and escaped on him for a space. The horse then fell dead, and two of the men dismounted and covered him, shooting some of the Zulus who were coming on. He caught Durnford's spare horse running by, and after some delay and danger from a shower of bullets, succeeded in getting Erskine's saddle on to the horse, and escaped. Durnford tried in vain to rally the men, and they went helter skelter down the pass, the captain—afraid to ride down—being sledged down on his stern.

The bodies were allowed to remain there several days, although there was not a Zulu near, and then they were buried by Durnford under a large cairn, erected with rocks, interspersed with the beautiful

heaths and flora growing around. Erskine's body was found in the source itself of the Orange river. The people erected a handsome monument to their memory in the market-square at Maritzburg, and another to those who fell at Isandhlwana—about thirty. Thus, out of a troop of fifty, thirty-three of the Natal volunteer carbineers fell in these two affairs owing, on both occasions, to the grossest mismanagement. *Ne sutor ultra crepidam!*

The tribe was afterwards hunted for two months in these mountains by volunteers only, and captured with their chief, Langalibalele, who was sent to the Cape, and kept more comfortably than he ever was in his life, in a nice house and grounds, with entire freedom to move about, his only grievance being that he was not allowed more than three of his wives, the cause of this distressing privation being simply that the balance would not come. An absurd proposition was sent out by the Home Government lately that he should be allowed to return to Natal, but it was promptly quashed by that Government. *Cœlum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt*, as was proved in the case of Cetewayo's restoration, “who had learnt and forgotten nothing.”

This, if it can be called one, is the only rebellion ever known, or likely to be known, in Natal, where the Kaffirs are thoroughly loyal. Shortly before this a little raid was made into Natal, by one of Moshesh's sons,

when two natives were killed and some cattle lifted. A force was sent up, too late, and *en route* the Colonial Secretary and Secretary for Native Affairs, who were sitting in a waggon, were watching a tribe, when they diverted, and forming regularly into line their orator ran out, and running as they do up and down made an oration, “There’s the Government in the waggon! What’s the meaning of this? Why is this land invaded? Why are our people killed and our cattle stolen? Why were we not called out sooner? Was it that we are not trusted? Wow!! There sit under that waggon Langalibalele’s people! Who are they? Dogs! that we used to hunt down; and would again; if not prevented by the Government.

Sir T. Shepstone did not even condescend to address them himself, but in a few words, through an interpreter, told them they were quite loyal, had the approval of the great Queen, and could *pass on*, which they did, moving off by companies from the right, like soldiers, and singing a war-song, making the earth tremble with their stamping.<sup>1</sup> All these tribes would fight well for us *at first* if there were to be a rising outside, but after a bit they would join their own kind, as they both feel and say that white and black blood can never mingle because we despise them.

The great change in climate and vegetation is very

<sup>1</sup> On such occasions extraordinary licence of speech is allowed by the Zulus.—ED.

perceptible on leaving fair Natal, for the cold, dreary, open, and inhospitable Free State. Harrysmith, in 1863, was a poor, dull, sleepy town, only supported and kept alive by a few transport riders on their way to the Transvaal and the small villages of the Free State. But after the annexation of the former State by the British Government in 1877, it soon became a town of importance, and being on the main road from Natal, large and well built stores, houses, churches, and schools soon put life into its inhabitants. Thanks to British gold for turning a howling wilderness into a land of promise !

I remained two days to gain news and information about the locality, and the various roads to the north. Game being plentiful in all directions, principally bles- and springbok, wildebeest or gnu, quaggas, hartebeest, and others. The ostrich was also plentiful. I decided to follow the game up, taking the advice of my Natal friend, who had recently returned from his shooting excursion. I took the road leading east, and less frequented than the others, which eventually leads to the newly-formed town of Wakkerstroom, on the eastern border of the Transvaal, and also north from that town to Lydenburg, now the gold centre. Anxious to make the most of my time, as I had to return to Natal before starting on my grand explorations to obtain a fresh driver and two Kaffirs, I was constantly in the saddle after anything that crossed

my path, travelling slowly on, shooting as much game as we required for the road. To shoot more would be mere waste, although the Boers make a practice of killing as many as they can for the sake of the skins, leaving the dead animals to be devoured by lions, wolves, or any other animal.

One night, as we were outspanned on the bank of a dry sluit, close to a small, but thickly-wooded koppie (hill) and large blocks of stone, we were disturbed by hearing the roar of two or more lions, within a very short distance of our camp. Not having made any preparation to receive visitors of this kind, we were all soon on our feet with rifles. The fire had gone out, but the stars gave some little light, sufficient to see all safe, particularly my horse. We were all on the watch, peering into the darkness, when we saw two lions cross over from the opposite bank and enter the near koppie. I was told before starting, by several old hunters, never to shoot at a lion when near, if it can be avoided, unless certain of killing ; for if only wounded he would attack before you could reload.

Our anxiety was for the safety of our oxen and horse, fearing they might get away and be caught by the lions. I made the two Kaffirs collect a few sticks, and with what was left from last night made a fire, which threw a light into the bushes, where we saw our two friends enter, and shortly after I saw a pair of

eyes shining like fire from out of the wood within thirty yards. If I could have depended on my Kaffirs, all being armed, he would certainly have had the contents of my rifle, but knowing them to be bad shots when cool, and that they would have been worse than useless in time of danger, to my great disgust was I obliged to stand and watch only. As they left the koppie, they made a circuit of my camp, but at a greater distance. Taking the two rifles from the young Kaffirs, placing them against the fore-wheel of the waggon, to be ready at a moment's notice, I could not resist so fine a chance of a shot in the open, only fifty yards distant ; the light of the fire giving out a good glare, I had a full view and fired, and found I had wounded one—the thud of the bullet is sufficient to know that. My driver, a fine Zulu, and young Talbot, had their rifles ready in case he charged, which he did, in short bounds. As he neared, they both fired and both hit, but not sufficiently to kill him ; but he was unable to move, as his hind quarters were rendered powerless. Reloading, we walked up, and I gave him a bullet as near the heart as I could, when he fell over ; the other we saw moving away into the darkness—a fine full-grown lion with dark mane. This was the third lion that had fallen by my rifle. The little affair detained us the following day, skinning and pegging out to dry in the sun, in addition to several other skins of the game shot on the

road. When a skin is taken from an animal, I sprinkle a little salt over it, then roll it up, to be pegged out at a convenient opportunity. We have now eleven skins since starting.

The next day we made a fresh move towards a lofty isolated hill in the Free State, which we reached in two inspans, and crossing a stony sluit, outspanned under a few trees, close to some very ancient stone walls built without mortar. They were square and some twelve feet high. The open plains were full of game of many kinds. Wishing to explore this hill, early in the morning after coffee I took my rifle to climb to the topmost ridge, letting John have the horse to get a springbok. After rambling about the hill, scanning the country all round, I was coming down when I nearly stumbled on a wolf (*hyæna*), which must have been asleep amongst the stones. I was within twenty feet when I fired, killing him at once. Not far away were two large black eagles; the report of the rifle sent them soaring away into space. About half-way down the hill I saw two stones that had evidently been cut into shape by a mason; they looked like coping-stones, with well-marked lines, and perfectly square. I took their measure and a sketch of each, both of them exactly a foot in length and six inches wide. They evidently belonged to some ancient building, but when? is a question not so easily solved. But other stone huts

two days' trek beyond, were clearly erected by a race long since passed away ; they were circular, with circular stone roofs, and nearly two feet thick, of partly hewn stone, beautifully made ; a stone door with lintels, sills, and door-plates. Kaffirs have never been known to build in this way ; between each hut there was a straight stone wall, five feet in height, with door-ways and lintels, communicating with each square enclosure, perfect specimens of art. They were, I believe, erected by the same people who worked the gold-mines, the remains of which we frequently find in the Transvaal and the Matabile, and beyond, where so many of their forts still remain. In the Marico district there are two extensive remains of these stone towns, which must, from their extent have occupied many years to complete. The outer wall that encloses the whole is six feet thick, and at the present time five feet high. Many large trees are growing out and through the roof of many of them. They are now the abode of the leopard, jackal, and wolf, and so hidden by bush they are not seen until you are close upon them. Broken pieces of pottery are the only things I have discovered. The present natives know nothing of them ; they are shrouded in mystery. Many remains of old walls are standing, showing that at one time this upper part of the Free State must have been thickly populated. At this outspan I killed a yellow snake, three feet in length, with *four legs*. I heard there

were such in Natal,<sup>2</sup> but this is the first I have seen. When he found he could not make his escape, he curled himself into a circle, with his head raised to strike similar to other snakes. I consigned him to a bottle of spirits. I also shot one of those beautiful blue jays, as there were many in this district.

I pass over my shooting exploits, as there is nothing worth recording, each daily trek being almost a repetition of the last, until we arrive in sight of Wakkerstroom, a poor village, a few houses, flat roofs, single floors built in an open country near a lofty hill, which stands on the main road from Natal to Lydenburg; we remained only a few days, then went north, as far as Lake Crissie, an open piece of water, no trees or bushes near, a solitary sea-cow is the only occupant of this dismal-looking place. In this district the Vaal river rises, and many small branches meet, until the veritable river is formed. The elevation at the lake was 5613 feet, and on a hill a few miles north I found the altitude above sea-level to be 6110 feet, an open grass undulating country as far as the eye could see, except on the east, where the mountain range that forms the Quathlamba is seen in the distance. I retraced part of the road, and turned south-east, over the hills leading to where Lunenburg now stands, and on towards Swaziland, which is an independent native territory, thickly populated and very mountainous;

<sup>2</sup> They run along the top of the grass, instead of through it.—ED.

there are rich gold-mines there now, and some of the mountains attain an altitude of 8000 feet.

The greater part of the summer months, a mist envelopes the hills, but it is a very healthy part of Africa, and horse sickness is rarely known to exist, consequently many horses are bred here. Passing Kruger's post, through Buffel forest, which is hilly, and splendid timber-trees cover the entire country, the scenery is grand and wild ; quartz reefs crop out in all directions, sandstone, shale, and in some places limestone overlap the granite formation, which compose these lofty ridges of the Drakensberg ; shale, which indicates the existence of coal, is frequently seen in the valleys, and along the Pongola river and its several branches.

I left Harrysmith on the 20th September, 1863, arriving on the banks of the Pongola river on the 16th October. In that time I had trekked 350 miles, being delayed on the road shooting and exploring the country.

The people at Wakkerstroom wanted to know what I was doing in the country, as I did not handel (trade), and was not a smouser, the term applied to those who went about the country in waggons to sell and buy. They would not believe I came into the country for pleasure and to shoot, but I was set down as an English spy, as I took notes and made sketches of the country. When I showed them a small draw-

ing of the town with the hill at the back, and people walking about, they held it upside down, and said it was *mooi* (pretty). Most of the Boers<sup>3</sup> are very slow in comprehending anything, the women are much quicker, and turned the picture round, and knew it at once, as also some Kaffir girls, pointing to the figures, naming whom they represented with expressions of delight. Some of the girls seem to have a natural gift for drawing and the beauties of nature, pointing out with their finger various objects, and explaining to those around what the drawing represented. I have often thought that many of these bright Kaffir girls might make good artists with proper training. Mrs. Colenso taught some to draw, paint, and play and sing. When they were about sixteen their father came for them, and they, quite delighted, ran off, stripped off their clothes, and went off naked, and never returned, just like some wild pigeons I had once tamed. They are also quite alive to the ridiculous: in the sketch were two horses playing, one standing with his fore-feet in the air; this caught their attention at once, causing great amusement, and imitating their action. They belonged to the Mantatees or Mahowas tribe, which is divided into many kraals under various chiefs, all subject to the head chief Secocome, who

<sup>3</sup> These people were the real cause of the Zulu war, because we would not allow the Zulus to “wash their spears” in their blood. Now the Boers are renting the land from them.—ED.

lives on the north of Lydenburg. The Pongola skirts the Swazi, or, as it is sometimes called, the Amaswasi-land, a very mountainous country, the people are Zulus, their habits and mode of fighting being the same. Many of these people came to my waggon with milk, which I took in exchange for tobacco and beads. The men are a fine manly race, and the women, many of them, good-looking, but very scanty in their dress, which is only a little strip of beads an inch wide. The Swazi country is situated between the eastern boundary of the Transvaal and the Amatonga, which is the northern part of Zululand, up to the Portuguese settlement in Delagoa Bay on the east side. It is governed by an independent chief, their laws and language being the same as the Zulus. The country has every indication of being rich in gold, some specimens of quartz I obtained from reefs running through the country looked very promising. The Pongola Bush, as it is called, is a beautiful forest of fine timber-trees. Some of the most valuable are the Bosch Gorrah, of a scarlet colour, fine grain; Ebenhout, a sort of ebony; Borrie yellow, Bockenhout, no regular grain; Assagaai, used for spear handles; Wild Almond, Grelhout, Saffraan, Stinkwood, Speckerhout, Wild Fig, Umghu, Witgatboom, Tambooti; White Ironwood, very hard, and many others of great use for many purposes. The Pongola river is very pretty, passing down through a richly-wooded district, with

its tributaries, flowing east and then north it joins the beautiful River Usutu, which enters the south side of Delagoa Bay. The Usutu river drains the greater portion of the Amaswasiland with its many branches; it rises on the east side of the Veldt and Randsberg, that is the continuation of the watershed from Natal, already described, which separates the waters of the South Atlantic and the Indian Ocean, some of the springs of the Usutu rising within a few miles of the upper springs of the Vaal, near Lake Crissie. The principal tributaries of the former river are the Um-taloos, Lobombo, Assagaai, Impeloose, Umkonto, and Umkompies, all uniting in the Swazi country; then it flows east, through a beautiful break in the Lobombo Mountains, and enters Delagoa Bay, as before described. For beauty of scenery and picturesque views, with the deep glens, ravines, and thickly-wooded kloofs of every variety of tint, few views in Africa will surpass them, and some day, when the country is prospected, if the Swazis will permit it, I believe it will be found to be a rich gold-bearing country, both alluvial and in the quartz. I went several times into the river-beds to prospect, the natives following me, watching my actions, but of course not knowing what I was looking for. As the time was drawing short I left the Pongola, and trekked down to Eland's Neck, where the country was more open, and on a small branch of that river, close to a very pretty waterfall,

are many fine tree-ferns, that grow to a great size. Here we were again in the clouds on the Elandsberg, at an elevation of 6000 feet, and overlooking Zululand, with the distant mountain in the background. With my boys to feed, and no small quantity satisfies them, the rifles were in constant use, and in an unknown country it is never safe to go any distance from the waggon without one. The Zulus have no other weapons than the assagai or knobkerrie. Wolves were nightly visitors ; several we shot, but not a lion was to be seen or heard. There were many leopards and panthers in the mountains, but they did not trouble us. My driver being a Zulu as well as the other boys, I got on very well with the people at the kraals I passed, and the girls came without any fear. In fact we always got on well with them, having provided myself with brass wire and beads, the principal articles in demand, as clothes they do not wear. They are exceedingly clean in their persons, and very fond of bathing. One afternoon I saddled up, and started for the open to get a buck. Passing through the bush to the river, I came upon nearly fifty black women bathing in the stream. Some scampered out on the other side, then stood and looked at the white man ; the greater number kept in the water splashing about, for it was not deep enough to swim, and laughing and cheering, showing their beautiful white teeth, not in the least afraid.

It is true I had been nearly a week outspanned near their two separate kraals, and they were daily at my waggon with milk, so that I was to a certain extent known to them, few white men being seen down so far in that part of Zululand.

*November 30th.*—It was time to make a move home-wards. I therefore prepared for a start, and the following morning took the road towards Natal, stopping at Deepkloof on my way, leaving on the right some very picturesque and lofty hills; not a farm-house to be seen. Having shot plenty of game for the road to last many days, by turning it into biltong, pushed on early the next morning, passing down one of the most stony and difficult passes to be met with in Africa, running against trees, which had to be cut down, breaking one of the oxen's horns, which had got fixed in the branches of a tree, and with difficulty I saved the waggon from being smashed. The view from this hill, looking west, was very fine, an open plain beneath us with lofty hills on the right and left, open to the south and west, where a distant view of the lofty peaks of the Drakensberg could be seen; the distance in a straight line being over eighty miles; so clear is the atmosphere they did not seem more than half that distance.

The next day about noon I came to a Boer farm, where we procured some milk, a little butter, and some meal. The comfortless manner in which these

people live is surprising, and the dirt displayed about the premises would shock many a poor labourer at home. The old Boer asked, which is always the first question put after shaking hands, "What's your name? where from? what have I up to handel (sell)?" After replying, "Then what's the news?" This is the usual salutation at every Boer farm, and, considering their isolation, a very practical one. Coffee is then handed round, and the tobacco-bag produced, to fill your pipe, as a matter of course. The old Boer complained sadly of the heavy storms that had passed over the country, and loss of cattle from lightning, the old vrouw putting in a word occasionally; their three buxom daughters sat on boxes, looking at the stranger as if he were some unknown kind of animal from a strange land.

We crossed a small branch of the Buffalo river, leaving the Belslaberg mountains, covered with bush, on our right. At the back of this range is a mineral spring on the White river, which is a tributary of the Pongola, the water being warm when it issues from the ground.

On the morning of the 4th of December, 1863, I started for Natal, on my backward journey, and trekked over an open country in two inspans, and arrived in the evening on the banks of the Buffalo river, which divides Natal from the Zulu country, and outspanned for the night, as I never travel after dark

for two reasons; the first, I cannot see the country, and the second, that I always meet with some accident in travelling a road not known, breaking dessel-boom, axle, or some part of the waggon, sticking in mud-holes, that would be avoided in daylight. The Buffalo is a fine stream, rising in the Drakensberg, passing the town of Wakkerstroom, and falling into the Tugela twenty miles below the town of Weenen, where it forms a broad stream to the sea, dividing Zululand from Natal. At the outspan there was a Boer with his waggon waiting to go through, the water being too high to cross; but it was going down, having risen from the heavy rains, and an accident having happened to his waggon by the bullocks turning round when trekking in the night, from fright probably by a wild beast, and breaking the dessel-boom; but on my arrival I found the young Boer and his vrou sitting by their camp-fire, taking their evening coffee, and after the usual shaking of hands was asked to sit, and a Bushman girl was told to give me a cup of coffee; afterwards, of course, a smoke.

Having made my waggon ready for the night, and looked after the boys and oxen, I took my evening meal with John; then walked over to the Boer waggon for a chat, where we remained until bed-time, which was nine o'clock. Sitting listening to the Boer's various tales of Zulu fighting, and hunting, and other anecdotes, I found he lived on a farm some little

distance beyond this outspan; his name was Uys, rather a pleasant kind of man for his class. Probably the father of Piet Uys, the hero of the Zulu war.

The next morning at sunrise I had a look at the river, which was not much lower; but an exciting scene was taking place, a flock of about 300 sheep was being swum through the river, which occupied all the first part of the morning. I was astonished to see how well they took to the water when they were in, the difficulty lay in getting them in: some would turn back, others go down the river; what with the bleating of the sheep, the shouting of a dozen Kaffir boys and their two Boer masters making a perfect din of sounds; however, with only the loss of two sheep, they got them safely over, and as the water was falling fast, everything was made ready to cross. My friend Uys took the lead. The banks on both sides being very steep, the breaks had to be screwed home to bring the waggons safely down to the water.<sup>4</sup> Each waggon had a fore-looper, a Kaffir, to take the fore-tow of the front oxen to keep them straight towards the opposite drift, otherwise they might take it into their heads to go down stream, and all would be lost. On his return from one of his expeditions on the east coast, Mr. St. Vincent Erskine, the traveller,

<sup>4</sup> They have also a tree towed behind as a drag, and ropes to the top of the waggon to prevent its upsetting.

on reaching Natal bought a horse, and as he had to swim several rivers he put his journal for safety into a waggon. It was carried down a river, the oxen and a white girl lost, and his journal. Long searches were made for it by numbers of Kaffirs, when the river went down, in vain. *Two years* afterwards it was found in its tin case, quite legible, being in pencil. It was in a bush so far above the river that no one had thought of looking for it. .

We reached the bank safely on the opposite side, which is Natal, and trekked on in a westerly course for a few miles, where we outspanned, and then went on again for a long trek, as there was nothing further to delay us, and the next day we continued on to a very pretty opening, close to the River Ineandu; the lofty Drakensberg range on our right, with its beautiful rugged outline, and deep kloofs, was grand to look upon. Game was more plentiful here than we had seen for some time, and we also found lions were not wanting to keep up the excitement during the night-watch. As we arrived late, there was nothing to do but have our fires, cook some tea and a slice of a young springbok over the red embers, with a little salt, mustard, and pepper,—a supper not to be cast on one side. We were rightly informed, and continued not to let the oxen and horse stray in the bush, but kept them near and in sight, for lions had considerably increased of late and had done

much damage in carrying off oxen when out in the Veldt. Mr. Evans, the merchant, once saw forty all together. We therefore made everything fast before going to sleep, and collected wood for fires, if it were necessary to light them during the night. My horse would have been a great loss; he was excellent when out after game, for, on dismounting and throwing the rein over his head to hang on the ground, he would not move from the spot until you returned from following up game where a horse could not go.<sup>5</sup> As there was no moon the night was getting dark, and while we were sitting round the camp-fire, listening to the boys' tales of some hunting expeditions they had been in, we were reminded that our friends the lions were not far away. In the stillness of night, when all is silent, the sounds made by a lion close at hand in a thick bush surrounding the camp, the deep tones of his growls make every one start, and look around to see if all is safe, and put more wood on the fires, to throw light into the bush, and take our rifles which had been left in the waggon. Although we could not see them, we knew they were close at hand; others were heard

<sup>5</sup> A good shooting-horse stops of his own accord when the game gets up, and seems to hold his breath while you fire. Once my famous horse "Pinwire" refused to pass a bush. As I could see nothing in it I pushed him on, but as he kept looking behind, I went back and saw a huge buck in it. I banged at it, and, being so close, the shot went like a ball past his head and missed him.—ED.

in the distance, and would no doubt come nearer ; sleep was out of the question, as a vigilant watch was necessary, in case they might make an attack on our oxen. Wolves also began to enliven the night-air with their sounds, and occasionally a jackal was heard. With the exception of a few scares, when they came too close to the waggon, the night passed off very well, and a lovely bright morning succeeded. We inyoked the oxen, and treked at daylight—saddling up the horse, I rode into the bush, but could see nothing except their footprints in the sand.

From this outspan to Ladysmith occupied five days. The country over which we travelled was very pretty, and in many places hilly. Ladysmith is another small town, where we remained the morning, and then started for the farm, and arrived on the 20th of December, 1863, in time to spend the Christmas with the old people.

Ladysmith is now the terminus of the railway, 180 miles from D'Urban. It is to be continued at once to Newcastle, passing through a rich coal district 100 miles, where it will be only about fifty miles from the nearest gold-fields. Natal only asks the Imperial Government to enable it to borrow the money at three per cent. for this great strategical work, which besides reaching the Transvaal, would afford the only coaling-station in South Africa.

## CHAPTER III.

Final departure for the unknown land—The happy hunting-ground.

CHRISTMAS Day, 1863; on the banks of the Tugela river, Natal; 96° in the shade, 149° in the sun; 9.30 a.m.; a cloudless sky, with scarcely a puff of air to relieve the oppressive heat. No greatcoats, thick gloves, mufflers, or snow-boots are needed on Christmas Day in these southern climes. The thinnest of thin clothes, and those but few, can be worn with comfort. I envy the native tribes their freedom from dress in such weather. But so it must be, I suppose; we are but children of circumstances, and must abide by the rules of society. Not always. The celebrated Mr. Flynn went naked among the Kaffirs for years, as also did Gordon Cumming.

But with all this glorious sunshine, sultry and oppressive atmosphere, Christmas is not Christmas as we know it in Old England, where friends meet friends in all the warmth of overflowing love and hospitality round the well-filled board, and the social gatherings round the hearth, with song and dance, and Christmas-tree. We live in its memory when it comes upon us

in this far-away land, hoping against hope that at its next anniversary we may be united again with those dear to us, and join in the festivities of merry Christmas in our native land. Father Frost, with his snow-white mantle, is a welcome guest at this season of the year; without him we know not what real Christmas is.

In this warm clime we endeavour to realize that Christmas is upon us, but how can we reconcile the fact with the thermometer at noon standing 106° in the shade, flies, ants, mosquitoes, and countless other insects buzzing round you, fighting after your food and filling the dishes, until you can scarcely make out what is in them. Such is Christmas in a sub-tropical land.

However, with all these drawbacks, my friends on the farm, who were colonists of eight years standing, did their best to keep up the old customs, their two daughters and one son—all born in England—with myself, and the old people, comprised our little family party. Plum-pudding, mince pies, venison, and fowls were served up in the old style, with good English bottled ale, and sundry fruits afterwards. We managed to pass away Christmas Day with many pledges of good luck and success to all absent friends in glasses of some real old whisky which I had in my waggon. Two Zulu girls attended, with a bunch of long ostrich feathers each, to keep off the flies during

meals, otherwise flies as well as food would have passed into the mouth.

But the day was not to terminate as brightly as it commenced. Soon after 4 p.m. dense clouds were rising over the lofty Drakensberg mountains in heavy massive folds, rising one after the other in quick succession, spreading out, expanding over the clear sky above, enveloping the mountain-tops, blending together earth and sky, a grand and beautiful sight, with the quick flashes of lightning and the distant rumble of the thunder. We watched with intense interest and admiration its rapid approach until we were warned by the hurricane that preceded it that the house was the safest place. Having made everything fast without, we waited its arrival. Those who have never witnessed a tropical thunderstorm can have but a faint idea of its violence, and in no place in Africa is it more so than in Natal. They are renowned for their rapid appearance and destructive effects.<sup>1</sup>

At half-past five it was at its height; the lightning was incessant and thunder continuous; the rain falling not in drops but in sheets, flooding everything. Shortly after six it was passing away to the east, the

<sup>1</sup> Fourteen soldiers were struck in one room in Natal, some men and two officers on parade another time; whole spans of oxen are often struck, the lightning running along the trek-chain. A woman woke up one morning, and found that her husband had been struck dead, by her side without her knowing it.—ED.

rumbling of the thunder growing fainter, until a calm succeeded, and the sun shone again in all its brightness, and the evening passed away as serenely and calm as if there were no such things as storms, the only evidence left being broken branches of trees, and every hollow full of water. However, this did not prevent our finishing up our Christmas amusements. I arranged to remain here until after the New Year, and prepare for my long journey to regions unknown. A driver and two boys had to be looked up.

On the farm was a middle-aged Hottentot, who had been a driver to a transport rider. Mr. Talbot told me I could have him if he would go, being trustworthy as far as blacks can be trusted. When spoken to on the subject he was all eagerness to be engaged, as driving was his legitimate work. Consequently John was engaged forthwith, and told to look out two boys to go with us. He said he knew two good boys in Ladysmith if I would let him go and get them, which I agreed to, and in five days he returned with two very likely lads who were used to waggons and anxious to be engaged—ten shillings a month and food. So far all was settled. The next step was to get my things from Maritzburg; this entailed a waggon journey.

Nearly every day we had thunder-storms, coming on in the afternoon, lasting nearly two hours, but not quite so violent as the one described, though

severe enough, in their passage over, to make us glad when they had left us, as the lightning is most destructive and dangerous. We had a very narrow escape on our return journey from Maritzburg. We were trekking past Doornkop, a lofty hill on the left of the road. A thunder-storm was gathering; consequently, anxious to outspan before it burst upon us, we were whipping up the oxen to reach an open space, when a flash descended perpendicularly, striking the road not twenty feet behind the waggon, where a few seconds before we were passing over. If our pace had been the slightest slackened, our lives would have been lost; as it was, we felt the effect of the electricity for some days afterwards. When storms are prevalent, never outspan near trees or stony koptjies; the latter seem to attract lightning more frequently; where it strikes on the stones it splits them into several pieces.

A slight description of my travelling-house may give greater insight into African travelling. My waggon measured seventeen feet in length and five feet in width. In front is a waggon-box for holding such things as are required for immediate use, and also for the driver, and another to sit on. Six feet of the front I reserve for my own special use; boxes arranged on the bed-plant, full of grocery and other things, upon which, a thick mattress and bed-clothes. On one side boxes are arranged to form tables for writing or

drawing. Around the sides of the tent are side-pockets for holding all kinds of useful articles, powder-flasks, shot, caps, brushes, books, tools, and other things required at a moment's notice.<sup>2</sup> On each side of the waggon my rifles, shot-guns, and revolvers are conveniently slung, that in a moment either of them can be in the hand, three on each side. The back part of the waggon is kept for bags of flour, meal, bread, water-casks, and everything needed for the road. My driver and boys sleep under the waggon or in the tent, as they may think fit. Such was my travelling-house. Therefore, when on the trek, I am independent, asking no favours of any one, and far from civilization I am at home and want for nothing, a grand thing for one who is going to explore unknown regions on the dark continent of Africa, where the white man's foot has never trod. What a field is before me!

On the 18th of March, 1864, having everything prepared, I started from the farm, after many farewells and good wishes for my success. I left with regret, feeling I had departed from true and valued friends, who had, to their utmost ability, helped me in my undertaking.

<sup>2</sup> Enormous "buck waggons" are now made for the diamond-fields. They require twenty oxen, and contain a sitting, a bedroom, and a kitchen, and a huge canvas covers the whole, and spreads out into side-tents for servants and horses. They do not answer off the main roads, as they cannot pass under the branches.—ED.

My oxen well rested, and horse fat and saucy, I had nothing to wish for but health and fair weather. The first part of my journey was back to Ladysmith, then on to Newcastle, crossing the Biggarsberg range of hills, going over the same ground I had recently travelled, and I arrived there on the 28th. My object was to make for the upper source of the Vaal river and commence my work at that point, but I found so much opposition with the Boers against my\* taking drawings on this second trip, that I changed my plans and settled to proceed to the westward and commence my surveys beyond their boundary, and finish the upper portion of the Vaal at some future time. Therefore I retraced my steps back from the upper Vaal by the road. I took the former route to Harrysmith; from thence trekked across the Free State, a most desolate and uninteresting country, and reached the Vaal river, which I crossed below Potchefstroom, where I began my work, arriving on its banks on the 25th of July, 1864. I have therefore omitted any reference to the country through the Orange Free State because I have nothing to relate, except that a more bleak, cheerless region could not be found; always excepting Walwich Bay, Angra Pequina, and the back of them. Every day's trek like the other, shooting game, inspanning and outspanning; most monotonous to one wanting to arrive at the unknown region.

At the Boer farms I came to, the people were very

civil and supplied me with milk, eggs, and butter *if they had any*; but few made any; if they did, it was only sufficient for a meal, the churn being an ordinary glass bottle, which is bumped on the thigh until the butter comes.

At one Boer farm in Natal, very early in the morning, the old man was turning out of bed when he opened the door, which lead into their principal sitting-room; the family, sons and daughters, were still what may be termed in bed, if sleeping on skins on the floor with old blankets and skins covering them, and in thin day dresses, can be called so, except the boys minus their coats, and the girls their frocks, without shoes or stockings, because they never wear them, except they go a-visiting. The old man asked me in and to take a seat. After the usual questions put and answered, a tall, well-grown Zulu girl brought in a wooden bowl with some water, and placed it on the table, with a small rag beside it. The old Boer got up from his chair, went to the bowl, and began to rub his hands, then his face, wiping them with this rag, which I afterwards found out was called a feed-hook. After the Boer, his three sons went through the same operation, and then I was invited to do the same, from which I politely excused myself, stating I had washed at the waggon. The four girls and the rugs had disappeared into the inner room. I was then about going to my waggon, when the old man told me

to "sit," coffee was coming, and presently the same Zulu girl brought in a cup of coffee for each. She was as black as she well could be, and without a particle of covering of any sort. The Zulu girls, as a general rule, wear some little bit of rag at their kraals, but this one had nothing. I found the Boers do this on purpose to show them they are an inferior race, and to keep them under. At many of the Boer houses I found their female servants were in the same way, as they have a wonderful prejudice against the black races, and treat them as dogs ; and I found out afterwards that all Boers' servants were slaves, and received no pay, their food being mealie, Indian corn, and milk. And as the boys and girls grew old enough to marry, any number of children would be seen on a farm, many of them piebald.

On the whole, the Boers are kind to the Kaffirs, and are liked by them because, though strict and sometimes cruel, they treat them more familiarly than we do. There is not such a gulf fixed between them as with us. Then, as to slavery, the work is light, and they have enough food, all they care about. In short, it is very much the same as in America formerly ; there are good and bad masters, and the Kaffirs who work are really happier than those who are idle. Slavery is really extinct in Natal and the Cape, and rapidly becoming so in the Boer States.

## CHAPTER IV.

The native country north of the Vaal river.

*26th July, 1864.*—On the banks of the Vaal, north of the river, I outspanned at a very pretty open piece of ground; not a house, hut, or living thing to be seen, except geese and ducks in the river, very tame and easily shot. The banks are very steep and covered with fine timber and bush. The water might rise forty feet and not overflow its banks. There are many deep sluits along the banks, where waggons cannot cross, therefore we have to go a long way round.

After travelling down the river for two days, we came to an old drift on one of the small rivers which rises in the north, and nearly overturned the waggon in getting through. There are some beautiful stones mixed in the gravel on the banks, some of the agates are very perfect. On the opposite bank was a small Koranna village, consisting of seven huts; the men came out to stare, the women and children kept hid in their huts; here my driver, John, became an im-

portant individual, for being of the same tribe, although calling himself a Hottentot, he could speak the same language, which was a succession of clicks with guttural sounds in the throat, quite unique in the world's languages. From these people I got my bearings, and found I was on the spruit called Scoon Spruit, here I took my first observation in the Vaal below the upper sources of the river.

The weather was very cold, sufficiently to wear great-coat. The Korannas informed me through my John, that the grass was scarce lower down the river. How these poor miserable-looking people existed was a puzzle to me, a few goats was all they possessed; half naked, and what covering they had was nothing but rags and skins.

The third day after my arrival I inspanned, and took a little exploring expedition to the north of the river, crossing several small streams where I could find a safe crossing, as there was no water in any of them, except here and there in pools; the country open and uninviting. In some places there were bushes and thorn-trees, where I made a point of out-spanning for the night to shelter the oxen, and procure food for our fires; fortunately there were no cold winds, a perfect calm, and sometimes the days were warm, but the nights cold. I spent some weeks in going over the country, but as I proceeded westerly I found great difficulty in crossing the many spruits

and small watercourses, causing much delay. At one of these where I was outspanned near a Kaffir kraal, my driver, by accident, had, in making a fire, ignited the grass, the only portion left from recent fires that had destroyed nearly every blade in the district, which gave a cheerless and desolate appearance to the country ; but, before it had spread any distance, we managed to extinguish it. The Kaffirs came running down from their huts, shouting, but before they arrived the fire was out, otherwise it would have been a serious matter with me, as it was the only grass they had for their oxen and cattle ; I might have lost all I had. When they came they saw it was an accident, as it had destroyed several ox reims that were lying on the ground. To make all right, a present of tobacco and the purchase of some brayed skins, made us friends ; money is not known to them ; barter is the medium of exchange.<sup>1</sup>

Again I visit the Vaal, where I follow it down, keeping to good grass until the spring grass comes, taking long rides over the country with my rifle, as game was plentiful, bles- and springboks, wildebeests, and steenbok, which is a small antelope, with horns

<sup>1</sup> There are dreadful accidents at times from these fires, and, strange to say, loss of life, although you can pass unscathed through the fire anywhere, even on horseback, as the horses will face it. But in attempting to beat out the fire people become asphyxiated, and so fall and are burnt.

six inches in length, very good eating when baked in an iron pot.

The country I have now trekked over leads up to two very fine springs and large vleis, which I find is the source of the Hart river, where Lichtenburg now stands. I soon found lions and wolves were numerous; we could hear them in the evening and at night, but had not seen any. Our outspan on the Vaal is in a snug nook of the river, with plenty of trees and bush, below where Bloomhof is now built. Wild ducks and geese were so plentiful, that of the former I frequently at one shot brought down six and eight, on the islands, for there are several, covered with trees and bush, as also are both banks; the river is very pretty.

In the evening, after fishing a short time, I would return to the waggon with six or seven large barbel, the tails reaching the ground when carried over the shoulder on a stick; they are fat, with few bones; the white or yellow fish is better eating but full of bones; much as I like fish, I do not care for these. The Boers are very fond of them. They are soft and tasteless; the eels are better. They grow to forty or fifty pounds.

The river is about 150 yards broad when it is flooded, the water rises in the narrow parts from thirty and sometimes fifty feet in height, entirely submerging the tall trees growing on the banks; at these times

the water is composed of one-third mud, but when low, as it is now, it is very clear, so much so, that I have frequently seen the iguana walking on its bed at a depth of five feet; some of them grow to a great size. I found three kinds, the very dark brown, the largest, measuring from head to end of tail five feet; they are very destructive in the farm-yards, visiting the fowl-roosts at night. I shot one a few nights ago, with legs a foot in length. Otters are also plentiful but difficult to find, their spoor was everywhere to be seen on the banks. Ant-bears and spring hares which resemble very much the kangars. Meercats abound all over the Veldt, they are grey, some have very bushy tails, others long and smooth, but along the river-banks they are red with black tails. The armadillo is also found covered with large scales, and when disturbed curls up similar to our hedgehogs. Snakes are not visible yet, the weather is too cold. I have shot three varieties of kingfishers, one very large and of a light grey colour. There are many beautiful birds along the river banks, also Guinea fowl, partridges and pheasants, consequently I vary my dishes. And with such a variety of small game, such as jackals and tiger-cats, we find plenty of sport.

*October 21st.*—I made a move down the river in the afternoon. A thunder-storm came on in evening, and we had to outspan near a large Koranna station, the nights closing in so quickly, and the road being unsafe to

travel in the dark. We made everything right before the storm broke over us. We were close on the high banks of the river, thick with trees and bush all round, not a safe place in a storm, but well protected from the wind. The night was fearfully dark and rough, and I had little sleep; the oxen breaking loose from the trektow, I had to wake the boys to secure them. Soon after breakfast the whole Koranna kraal turned out to come and stare at the white man; men, women, and children, about seventy in all, as motley a group as could well be found; some of a dark dirty drab, light yellow, and blackish brown, many of the younger ones almost white and with rather pleasing countenances; all of them in a half-nude state, the children entirely so. The grown-up females had old and dirty Kaffre sheets thrown over their shoulders and held in front; the men wear parts of what once were trousers, but are now in rags, made of skin. I began to think I had fallen into about as fine a nest of unwashed and half-starved rascals as I should meet with in my travels; my driver, John, knowing their language, could talk to them. My waggon was soon surrounded, each one begging for a piece of machuku (tobacco), the women and children forming a half-circle in front of the waggon, sitting down two and three deep, all asking for tobacco. I gave some to the men, who commenced smoking through bone pipes made out of the leg bone of bleshok, about four inches in length,

in which they put the weed at one end and drew from the other. One old shrivelled-up woman was persistent in her demand, and got quite cross because I took no notice, and abused me in her tongue, which I knew from her manner; I therefore would not give her any. Sitting on my waggon box in front, I looked at her, and putting my thumb to my nose and extending my fingers in her direction, called forth a yell from all the women and young ones, every one imitating my action returned the compliment to me. Their action looked so ludicrous, I could not resist bursting out into a hearty laugh, this exasperated them the more; taking no notice of all this noise, they began to see it was no use, therefore one by one came holding out her hand asking quietly for a piece. I told John to tell them I would not give them any because they abused me; they then came and wanted to kiss my hand, finding they could not do that, they kissed my coat, boots, anything they could touch of my clothes; at last, to get rid of them, each had a piece given them, then I was everything that was good, and blessings came tumbling down upon me wholesale. A large circle of the women was soon formed round the fire in a sitting position, smoking away, about thirty, old and young, the old Kaffre rags thrown on one side careless of results, modesty being unknown. The men standing round or sitting beyond the circle completed a group worthy a better

artist than I am to give it full effect, and in the evening the bright glare of a large fire, bringing prominently into view the figures against the background beyond, and many of the large stems of the trees and branches, showing out brightly, completed the picture. But the charm was broken by the din and noise of the people, all talking, laughing, singing, and some dancing. A happy people! no cares for the present or the future. This sort of amusement went on until ten o'clock, then I gave my John orders to clear them all off, for I wanted to sleep; any that remained behind were to have no tobacco to-morrow; this had a magical effect, they cleared at once, and silence reigned supreme, and the night passed away in peace.

I outspanned at a sharp bend of the Vaal, on the fifth day from the Koranna station, where there is a stony drift crossing the river to the missionary station at Pniel, where Bloom and his people lived. In 1869, extensive diamond-diggings were worked here, and many thousand people were employed at Pniel and Klip Drift; both were very extensive camps, the latter being the head-quarters of the Provisional Government, previous to the annexation of Griqualand West, when it received the name of Barkly, and continued to be the head-quarters up to 1875, when all the departments were transferred to Kimberley.

*October 30th.*—I went down early in the morning to the drift, with my span of oxen, to help a Boer, whose waggon had stuck in the middle of the river, and his small and poor span could not move it. Fortunately the water was very low, otherwise the great boulders that blocked the wheels could not have been removed. His vrou and kinder (children) were sitting in the waggon with their faces wrapped up, only their eyes visible, a common practice with them when on the road. They are always getting what they call sinkings (neuralgia).<sup>2</sup> Having hooked on my trektow with my span of fourteen, the waggon was brought out and up the steep bank in safety, and outspanned a short distance from my camp. He informed me he had come from the Free State, and was on his way up country for skins from the Kaffirs. The vrou was handed out of the waggon, a camp-stool put for her, a fire made, the kettle put on for coffee, and things made comfortable. We had some difficulty in landing the vrou, she being rather stout and short, quite a genteel figure, measuring, as correctly as my eye could judge, about five feet round her waist; rather “off-coloured” complexion. Her principal occupation seemed to be sitting on her camp-stool; she was not fit for active work. The

<sup>2</sup> This is universal among the Boers, and is no doubt to be attributed to their badly-constructed houses, without cellars or foundations, and having mud floors.—ED.

whole family was suffering from inflamed eyes, a common complaint caused by dirt. So far as I have seen of the Boers, there is scarcely a family without one of its members being so afflicted. This is purely from never washing themselves ; they have a natural horror of water touching their persons.

There are many Hottentot, Koranna, and Bushmen living along the river-banks ; they have so intermixed by marriage that there is little difference between them. Some are of opinion that the Koranna is the true Hottentot, but the people, as a general rule, are taller and of a lighter colour than the real Cape Hottentot, but as I have stated, from their intermarriages it is difficult to draw the line. The Bushmen of the north are much more distinct from those in the south. There are also many of the Bechuana tribe living in small detached kraals, and Bastards, so called from being born of Dutch fathers and Hottentot women in the early occupation of the Cape colony, and from the great increase in their number they have become an important tribe, and are found in all parts of South Africa. They do not differ from the Boers in habits and customs, and when able build their houses similar to those of the Boer. In fact there is but a slight difference between them, particularly those who are living in the Transvaal. It is interesting to study how the blood of a tribe or different nationality will show itself after many generations ; as an instance, in one family I am

well acquainted with, the grandfather is an old Boer, whose mother was a bushwoman ; his son married a Boer girl, and their daughter married a German, the eldest son of this marriage was a half black ; the second son very fair, with light hair and blue eyes ; the eldest daughter very dark, black hair and eyes, quite half black ; the second daughter very fair, light flaxen hair and light blue eyes ; the third daughter and third son were both half black, black eyes and crisp black hair ; the fourth son again was fair. This family was the fourth generation from the black and white marriage. I know of several other similar cases, and most of the Transvaal Boers are of this breed.

*November 10th.*—I returned from a five days' trek down the river, where the junction of the Hart river falls into the Vaal, and close to a large Kaffre kraal, under the chief Jantze of the Bechuana tribe, and found the old Boer outspanned at the same place ; he was afraid to proceed, having heard the Boers of the Transvaal were still fighting amongst themselves, which had been going on for a long time, and which was the reason of my leaving the country last October, causing me to alter my plans, and on the 29th of November, 1864, I left the Vaal at high drift for the north. Two days' trek over a stony road, between low hills covered with vaal bush, which is in full bloom at this season of the year, giving out a pleasant perfume, the leaves also

being strongly scented, and when boiled in water are sometimes used for tea.

Towards the Hart river the veldt is level, with several isolated ranges of hills. At the west end of one there is a conical hill, formed entirely of limestone and fossil bones, so blended together that it is impossible to separate them, teeth, jawbones, and other parts of animals, large and small, are found. The surrounding hills are of sandstone formation, with large boulders of a bluish colour that overlap them. I think there can be no doubt as to the origin of the formation of this chalk hill, viz. by the action of the water when submerged in the ocean. The bones and chalk, the latter being held in solution, would be brought together and deposited in comparative still water by the eddy formed by the current rounding the end of the adjacent hill, but from whence the immense mass of bones comes is a question not so easily solved; being of the same specific gravity they may have been deposited in the eddy. I visited the hill several times in passing, and spent many hours on its side and summit with my hammer breaking off pieces to ascertain if any human remains could be found, but not being an anatomist my labour was partly in vain. Of every piece of rock I detached from the hill nearly one half was composed of bones, all perfectly white, the same as the limestone, and exceedingly hard. In many other localities I have

found masses of bones imbedded in limestone, the former have been white, the latter of a dark greyish colour, forming extensive caves, from which beautiful springs of delicious water flow, showing that animal life existed prior to the general configuration of the present earth's surface.

During my two days' journey from the Vaal river large herds of game were seen in all directions, keeping me in the saddle all day to provide food for the road. Lions, wolves, and jackals were heard nightly, and came prowling round our camp at no great distance, but never came sufficiently close to be seen. A few miles beyond the bone hill, if I may so call it, we crossed the Hart's river, a bad and muddy drift, where there were many Kaffre huts. Ascending the hill beyond, I came to "Great Boetsass," where the chief would not allow me to outspan, as he said I had come for no good, being sent by the Boers of the Transvaal to take down on paper all the watering-places; therefore I was detained whilst he and his head men held a kind of "raad" over me, to decide what they should do. Finally they decided to send me out of the country in the direction of Malluxas kraal at Taungs, the head chief of the Bechuanas, with a guard of six men to see me clear, and put me in the road, following me up for several miles; they then left me in the middle of the veldt, without a road or anything to guide me. The chief would not believe

my statement. To have resisted would have been folly, as I could do very little against a hundred Kaffirs. All the women and children kept to their huts, the men assembled quite in a nude state, except a small cloth in front, and were armed with assagais and knobkerries. When I was leaving, they came demanding some tobacco ; I told them they should have none ; if they had behaved well, I would have given them plenty.

Finding these Kaffirs had been so badly used by the Boers, and not knowing the English, they insulted every white man that came into their country ; and having heard very bad accounts of the people at Taung and the villages around from the same cause, I determined, when the guard left me, to strike across the country and give them a wide berth, otherwise I might be detained again. Two years after, when visiting this kraal, the chief, when he found out who I was, told me he was very sorry he had turned me away.

After proceeding several miles we came to a single hut where a bushman lived, looking after a few goats, who directed me what course to take. Giving him a little tobacco I proceeded a few miles to a thick forest of trees, close to a pan of water, where I outspanned for the night. At many of these pans, and when travelling over the country, I would pick up flint implements that were lying exposed on the surface.

On some of the large rocks in out-of-the-way places, carvings of a variety of animals, snakes, and men are occasionally stumbled upon in the stone "koptjies," quite artistic in execution. The instrument must have been of good steel to make any impression on the hard stone. I do not think they are the work of Bushmen, as some suppose, but those who once occupied this country in search of gold many hundred years ago; as there is such extensive evidence in this country, in the old pits remaining, of former workings.

*December 4th.*—Shot a fine hartebeest early in the morning from the saddle, and after breakfast started with waggon, following a track partly overgrown with bush, over an undulating country, sometimes through a thorn country and Kameel-down trees, where thousands of game were literally covering the open plains in every direction as far as the eye could see. Blue wildebeest, bles- and springbok, quaggas and many other kinds; there was one drove of quaggas, at least a thousand, crossing the path I was travelling, only a few hundred yards in front, going at full speed, a beautiful sight.

Outspanning in the evening near a large pond, we disturbed as we approached, several hundred ducks, which kept us employed until dark in adding to our larder. In the morning the Namaqua partridge in coveys of twenty to a hundred, came to water.

They are the size of a dove, the time to shoot them is when they are sitting at the edge of the water and when they rise; in two shots I killed fifty-four; they are called also sand-grouse.

The next day I passed through a pretty country, well wooded and low hills, noted as the lion veldt; therefore I trekked on to get clear of the bush before night, and came to a very large brak pan, at least four miles in circumference, called Great Chue Pan. On the bank was a small spring of good water, and an open country, where we remained the night. The oxen were let loose to feed, and the horse knee-haltered to feed, before making them fast for the night to the trektow, my invariable custom, to prevent their straying; the loss of your oxen is almost death to the traveller. They were feeding some distance from my camp, when they were seen in full gallop coming to the waggon, and did not stop until close home; we knew they were frightened by lions. At night, soon after dark, we heard the roar of several, in the direction where the oxen had been feeding. We made them fast round the waggon, and close in front collected wood for fires, which we kept up all night; and all of us on the watch with rifles, for they never ceased their roar, sometimes very near, but being very dark and cloudy I could not see them.

As a book of reference, describing the physical geography of South Central Africa, it is necessary in

the first instance to give the several river systems or basins comprised within this region ; and, secondly, to give the results of my explorations, not in consecutive journeys, but in a detailed description of each separate region visited from time to time, as I had frequent occasion to travel over the same ground for the purpose of completing my labours, so that no portion of any region should be left unexplored. For when such an immense area of nearly 2,000,000 square miles has to be visited, to survey the whole necessitates frequent visits to the same district, to be able to reach those parts beyond. Consequently I have passed through all this region many times.

## CHAPTER V.

On Griqualand West, the Griquas, Korannas, Bushmen, and Diamond Fields.

PREVIOUS to the annexation of this country by the British Government, it was occupied by various tribes under petty chiefs, ruling each their separate kraals, the banks of the Vaal and Orange rivers being the most thickly populated districts. So far back as 1820 there were mission-stations established at Griqua Town and Campbell, by the Rev. — Campbell, and Anderson and others. The country at that time was peopled by Korannas, Bushmen, Bechuanas, and Griquas, under the chiefs, Choodeep, Keidebio, Siffonel, and Sebedare ; the two latter were Bechuanas of the Baralong family, who had large kraals and many people. Soon after the country was overrun by hordes of Kaffirs living more to the east of what is now the Transvaal, of various tribes, some of the chiefs being the Bapedi, Makatee or Mantatees, afterwards called Basutu or Musutu, under Moshesh, whose habits and customs in war were similar to the Zulus—their weapons, the assegai and long oval shield, the shield of the

Bechuana being square, hollowed out on the four sides<sup>1</sup>

Soon after the Rev. Robert Moffat and the Rev. — Campbell established the mission-station at Kuruman, which was made the head-quarters of the London Missionary Society in Bechuanaland, forty miles beyond the northern boundary of Griqualand West and, at the same time, two other stations on the north and north-west of the latter station, Baclairis and Matelong ; and, subsequently, the German mission was established at Pniel, on the banks of the Vaal, about fourteen miles to the north, where Kimberley now stands, and a missionary is now doing duty there.

At Griqua Town the mission-house is in ruins, the church is still kept up, and the missionary from Kuruman goes over and holds service. At Campbell the mission-house and church are both in ruins. Upper Campbell, which is a mile to the north of Lower Campbell, on the top of a range of hills called Campbell Randt, has only a few houses occupied by Griquas ; a Mr. Bartlett occupies the farm. Another mission-

<sup>1</sup> These Mantatees are so called from the name of their queen, who was the widow of a petty chief and elected queen. The Kaffirs had a fancy for a queen, and the tribe became very powerful. At last she was deposed by her prime minister, Moshesh. She fled to Natal, and died there in obscurity. Moshesh had 20,000 horsemen, and gave us more trouble than any other chief. At last the Boers of the Orange River Free State wore him down—ED.

station, established after Lower Campbell, was at Lekatlong, near the junction of the Harts and Vaal rivers, by the same London Society, under the Rev. Mr. Ashton, but the church and house are in ruins. Mr. Ashton lives now at Barkly, and goes over occasionally to hold service. It was a large Bechuana station under the chief Jantje, who has now removed with his people to Masupa, beyond the northern boundary of Griqualand West.

The Griquas many years ago settled down on both sides of the Vaal. Adam Kok settled at Nomansland, on the borders of Natal, with his people. Andries Waterboer settled with his people at Griqua Town, occupying the whole of the western division of Griqualand West, dividing it into farms ; and at the death of Andries, his son, Nicholas Waterboer, became chief, and it was with him the British Government arranged to annex the country to the British Government in 1871.

Waterboer lived in a nice house, well furnished, and the family live as respectably as any Boer family. I was invited to a dance one evening by Waterboer, when the *élite* of the families were invited. All the fashionable dances were correctly and well performed to the music of the harmonium, which one of his sons played ; his daughters were well behaved, and I was much pleased to see such refinement in this out-of-the-way corner of the world among the natives. Since

that time he has been made a prisoner, deprived of his chieftainship, and is now living in Hope Town, the principal portion of his people being driven from their lands. The Griquas are a religious and well-conducted people, kind and hospitable, but lazy, and they will only work when obliged. They plough and cultivate their lands, are fond of coffee and visiting ; like their Boer brothers in habits and customs, being descended from Dutch and Bushmen, they retain the habits of the former. Many of the Boers of the Transvaal are descended from these people. In this province they are found in less numbers than formerly, but some are living along the Orange river and the western district.

The Korannas had large kraals along the Vaal and Orange before diamonds were found ; since then they have gone more to the west into the Kalahara desert. They are, as I have before stated, a dirty and dishonest tribe, not to be trusted in any way ; their main stronghold is at Maamuosa, on the Harts river, under the chief, Moshoen. The Bushmen also have considerably decreased. When I first knew them, in 1864, these two tribes lived together with scarcely anything to cover them. At the present time they all wear clothes of some sort, and are in a better position in consequence of the Diamond Fields bringing money into the country. I have had several of them for my servants at different times, but could make nothing of them. Speaking to

my Koranna boys about their marriages, they tell me when a man and woman agree to be man and wife, as soon as that is settled between them, without asking any one's permission or going through any ceremony, they are then and there married, so long as it suits them ; if either wish to break off the engagement, they tell the other party that he or she can go and get another wife or husband, as the case may be ; the children, if any, are divided by agreement. In 1867 I had a Koranna boy, about twenty, who got married when in my service ; seven months after they got tired of each other, so he took another girl, and his old wife married the other boy I had. In 1877 I had another Koranna, who changed his wife three times when in my service. The Hottentots and Bushmen do the same ; they never have more than one wife at a time.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> When magistrate at Walwich Bay, I sent a number of them up to the Cape, by order of the Government. The women were all directed to be married, but one was found to be single—a fine girl. I directed the single men to be paraded, and told the girl to choose one, which she did, amidst some merriment among the party, and I proclaimed them man and wife, having previously asked the consent of the man, who gave it quite passively, and apparently only in obedience to my wish. I went up in a schooner with them, and a few days after there was a slight disturbance, owing to this man beating his bride. He said it was in consequence of her speaking to another man. I told her that I was surprised at her conduct after I had bestowed on her the man of her heart. She promised that it should not occur again, and he not to beat her. I was pleased at the success of my matrimonial

All the other tribes can have as many wives as they are able to keep. They belong to the Bechuana family, and live more in the northern part of Griqualand West, near the Harts river, as all the lower parts are occupied by English, Dutch, and others in farms, allowing small native kraals to remain on them, that the occupiers may have the use of their labour when required, and they are allowed a piece of ground to cultivate and grazing for their cattle.

Diamond-digging first commenced in the latter end of 1869 at Hebron, on the Vaal river; then at Klip Drift early in 1870, now called Barkly, and on the opposite side of the river Pniel, where large camps were formed employing many thousand people at each place, all living under canvas. Then prospecting parties went down the river, forming large camps at Delporthorpe, Esterhanger, Blue Jacket, Forlorn Hope, Keisikanima, Union Coppie, Gong Gong, Webster's Kops, Waldeck, Plant, and down the river

venture, as it showed that the man was not so indifferent as he seemed to be. These were full-grown Bushmen, not Hottentots of the dwarfed and degraded type of the mountain Bushmen of Natal. I took one as a servant—a boy—whilst travelling. He had been taken out of charity by our cattle-watcher, as he was starving. He had a full supply of food always with the men, and besides at my breakfast and dinner as much as he could eat. But one day, when my dinner—a wild guinea-fowl—was cooking in a pot, he ate up the whole of it like a dog; so I found it necessary to discharge my valet, as an incurable savage.—ED.

from Barkly fifty-five miles to Siffonel. These composed the principal river diggings. Diamonds have been found much lower down in the Orange river at Priska, and 100 miles above Barkly, and at Bloemhof-but, no claims have been worked beyond those named. All these river diggings are now abandoned, with the exception of a few hundred, where thousands once occupied the ground. The discovery of diamonds at New Rush, now Kimberley, Old De Beers, Du Toit's Pan, and Bultfontein, and from the great quantity of diamonds found, drew all the diggers from the river to take claims in those four rich and valuable mines, which are now being worked with expensive machinery at an enormous expense. The Kimberley mine is the largest, being nearly half a mile in diameter and 360 feet deep, with engine and hauling-gear round the whole distance. It is the same with the other mines; the population, including whites and blacks, must exceed 30,000. Kimberley is twenty-five miles south-east from Barkly, and is the great diamond centre, where the government of the province is carried on. These four principal mines cover an area of over six square miles, and are situated in a part of the country the most wretched, barren, and exposed I have ever been in; no trees, but open dreary plains, surround the mines in all directions. Up to 1884, the people and machinery were supplied with water from wells, which did not give sufficient for their wants. A

company was established to draw the water from the Vaal river, distant some twelve miles, by an engine pumping the water into reservoirs and by pipes.

Kimberley is the great mining centre and the important town in Griqualand West, and in all this part of Africa roads branch off to all parts of the country. It is the terminus of the Cape railway. From Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State, the distance is about 100 miles; from Kimberley to Bloemhof 90 miles, and from the latter to Pretoria, in the Transvaal 210 miles. To Barkly it is 25 miles, and from that town to Taungs, in Bechuanaland, 80 miles, and to Kuruman, N.N.W. from Barkly, 120 miles.

There is also a direct road from Kimberley, through the Free State to Maritzburg, in Natal; the distance is about 400 miles; besides many others to all parts of the country.

Barkly, up to 1875, was the seat of the government, when it was removed to Kimberley. It was then a busy and thriving town, several hotels, club-houses, bank, high court, and other offices. The town, since this change, has fallen off considerably. It stands on the lofty bank of the Vaal, 100 feet above the river, with stone koppies surrounding it, bare almost of vegetation, not an inviting locality to settle in. It has become now the frontier-town for the interior trade; the river being 500 feet broad,

there is plenty of room for boating. Many of the inhabitants enjoy, in the summer, a sail on its waters, which is in many parts deep. The banks are well clothed with trees that add greatly to the beauty of the river. Two passenger-carts run daily between this town and Kimberley, passing over the pont, which is capable of taking a waggon and span of sixteen oxen on at one time. Since then a bridge has been erected.

The geological formation has many varieties of rocks:—The siliceous and crystalline limestone of the Campbell Rands, a range of hills that runs through the northern portion of this province, from the chief Monkuruan's town at Taung, in a south-west direction, on the north side of the Harts river, down past Campbell Town to the Orange river, where it breaks up into many spurs, where are amygdaloidal and ancient conglomerates, and schistose rocks, with shale and sand form the lofty hills along the Vaal, which is the same throughout the whole course of this river in Griqualand; and on the opposite side, at Pniel, Backhouse, Hebron, and the koppies on its banks, is jasper with magnetite along the Kuruman range which passes Griqua Town, and quartzite sandstone at the Langberg range of mountains, which runs north for several hundred miles into the Kalahara Desert, and forms part of the western boundary of Griqualand West. Plumbago, shale, sandstone, and ferruginous breccia at these peculiar hills at Blauw Klip and Matsap.



THE FIRST BOAT THAT EVER SAILED ON THE ORANGE RIVER



Limestone on the northern boundary and at Danielkuil. Felspathic rocks, olive shales, and gravels, are seen in the hills on the river near Langberg mountain. The boundary of this province commences at Kheis on the Orange river, the extreme western point, opposite Scheurberg mountain, following the river up to Hope Town on to Ramah, the Cape Colony being on the south side, then in a N.N.E. direction to Platberg, near the Vaal river; the Free State boundary also; thence in a N.N.E. direction, crossing the Vaal, and Harts river, the joint boundary of the Transvaal by the last convention, and also the boundary of Monkruean's territory, then turns W.S.W. to a tree, north of Nelson's Fountain on to a point in Langberg, thence to Kheis on the Orange. This part of Griqualand West is wild and grand, lofty mountains broken up into isolated and perpendicular masses, a thousand feet high, with lofty projecting rocks jutting out from their sides; the dark colour of the stone gives additional grandeur to the landscape. This kind of scenery continues up and down the river from Kheis for nearly 100 miles.

From Griqua Town to Bultfontein, over sixty miles, the country is of the same character, the road passing along from that town to Wittwater, Reedfontein, Modderfontein, Bluebush Kalk, to Bultfontein, on the Orange river, a pretty site for a town. It is a Kaffir station of several tribes.

At Modderfontein, nearly on the summit of one of the lofty hills, are several Bushmen's caves. The largest is capable of holding 200 people; the rocks within show evidence of fire by their smoked appearance, and many years ago were occupied by that bloodthirsty tribe mentioned in my description of the Kalahara. The Griquas living here told me they have passed away, but the old man stated their fathers could remember them. The mountain road leaves Bultfontein and goes west no great distance from the river, over a very stony road, on to the Pits, where several Griquas have comfortable houses, situated on a pleasant open space, rarely to be equalled for beautiful views in all directions. I remained here several days to ramble and explore the mountain tops. I took my driver in case of accidents, as leopards and lions were known to be there, as one old Griqua told me they frequently lost a goat by being taken from the kraal at night. Vegetation up the kloofs and on the slopes of the hills is very fine; beautiful tree-ferns, and every variety of other kinds, particularly the maidenhair, which grows out amongst the rocks on the mountains, are very beautiful; also some very fine ground orchids, and a thorny bush with crimson flowers, as also many varieties of aloes.

This district contains copper and lead, and from the appearance of the quartz which crops out, I believe gold will be discovered when this part is prospected.

One road from this place goes down to the river through a fearful valley, it is necessary to “riem” (tie) the four wheels of the waggon, otherwise it would go crash down into the precipice below, and then turn over and be smashed. This was the road I took to the river on a previous journey. The other passes on to Milk Start Pass in the Langberg range, fifty miles more to the west, which I crossed on the western side, and outspanned under some fine old trees, close to a perpendicular rock at the foot of the Berg, where we found a small pool of water in the rocks, collected from the recent rains, and good grass. The pass over the mountains was a most difficult and dangerous road, large holes and boulders blocking the way. The scenery on both sides was grand, lofty and perpendicular rocks, 2000 feet high, with beautiful shrubs and flowers growing out from every crevice. The light and shadows thrown on the opposite hills by the setting sun gave beauty to the landscape.

At night some leopards paid my camp a visit; a few sheep I kept as a reserve for the road appear to have been the cause of their troubling me. A Bushman and his son came early in the morning and told my boys where the leopards could be found, and as their skins made splendid karoses, we arranged to hunt them down if possible, taking the Bushman as guide to point the way. Three of my boys, myself and two dogs, followed the spoor for several hundred yards. Up

amongst the spurs of the mountain, the old Bushman pointed to a ledge of rocks overhanging others, surrounded by bush. We then sent the dogs to ascertain their whereabouts, for we knew there were at least two by their spoor on the sand. As soon as the dogs, by their barking and unmistakable fear, showed exactly where they were, we took up our position on separate rocks, forty yards distant from the tigers' den. Two of my boys were to keep up a fire into where we knew them to be, myself and driver kept ready to overhaul any that might come out. We heard nothing but low growls from time to time; the affair began to be interesting. After nearly a dozen bullets had been sent in, out came a fine male leopard at one bound over some bushes, looking anything but amiable, and took a deliberate survey of his surroundings, his fine spotted skin shining in the sunlight—a beautiful animal. But this was only for a few moments, three bullets entered his body at once, when he gave a spring, and fell on one side, and as he did not appear quite dead I gave him another in the region of the heart, for I have known them drop like this, and then spring up and seize upon those near them. The other, which we concluded was the female, made her escape amongst the rocks. I then set the Bushman and my Hottentot boy to take off the skin, and the rest returned to the camp, where we found the dogs lying down by the fire, evidently ashamed of their

desertion by their fawning manner to make friends. Animals have more sense than instinct ; they knew perfectly well they had done wrong in leaving us.

This range of mountains, which runs due north, as I have stated, forms the south-eastern boundary of the Kalahara desert, and looking towards the west for thirty miles from the base the country is almost level, a few sand-dunes and gentle rises up to the Scheurberg mountain range, which looks one compact mass of lofty peaks. But on a close inspection, there are many detached and deep valleys running between. A native road passes about midway through on to the Koranna and Bastard stations on the Orange river. There are a great many lions in these hills, as it is uninhabited, except by Bushmen. On my previous exploration along these hills, where I outspanned near a Bushman kraal, one of them told my boys that a few days before our arrival a lion had entered one of the huts and carried off a young boy ; they followed him in the dark with burning brands but had to give up ; they could only trace him by the screams of the lad, but they soon ceased. Across the desert from this point westward, it is 330 miles.

Leaving the camp the next morning after the leopard-hunt, we proceeded in a northerly direction for thirty-three miles along the west base of Langberg, and arrived, on the second day, opposite Speck Koppie, where another pass crosses the mountain, which is a

very stony and rough road, but the scenery grand on both sides, similar to that we passed through a few days ago, and arrived at a farm belonging to Potgieter, a Boer. From thence on to koppies, Mr. Ryland's farm, Blaaw Klip, is six miles beyond, where, in a hill, a soft stone is dug, which the natives form into pipes, plates, vases, and many other useful articles. And beyond, in a north-east direction, is Mount Hexley, Maremane and Coses, a Kaffir station. The formation of the hills is very peculiar, lofty, isolated koppies, covered, many of them with thick bush, others almost bare, the naked rocks piled one upon another in grotesque forms. The dry river-bed passing through this part is a branch of the Kuruman river. We then crossed the Kuruman range, and arrived at the mission-station 2nd January, 1865.

Before leaving this part of the Griqualand West, I should like to describe that peculiar sand-formation on the west side of the Langberg mountains, which is in fact part of it. I heard from many of the Griquas and Potgieter, living near it, that the lofty hills are constantly changing; that is, the sand-hills, 500 and 600 feet in height, in the course of a few years subside, and other sand-hills are formed where before it was level ground.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> I regret very much the description of this sand formation has been left out, it being the only extraordinary geological formation known in Africa, and fully describes the musical sand.

*May 5th, Sunday.*—Attended Mr. Moffat's church; the service is held in the Bechuana language. About 400 natives present. The singing is as well performed as it is in any English church at home. The Kaffirs, who are Bechuanas, have fine clear voices, and the women are well known to have sweet, musical voices. The service is well conducted, and the natives as attentive as any white congregation in a civilized country. I first attended at this church in 1868, when the Rev. Robert Moffat was living there, previous to his finally leaving for England. In 1869 I was again there, detained for many weeks with a severe illness, and through the kind nursing of Mr. and Mrs. John Moffat, Mr. and Mrs. Levy, and other English residents, soon recovered. I remember well before leaving at that time, they got up a little picnic party, to visit some ancient Bushmen caves, a few miles from the mission-station towards the hills, taking a cart with provisions, the party riding, and a very enjoyable day we had. As we approached the hills the country became covered with bush and long grass, where I may safely say, several hundreds of baboons were busy seeking roots in the grass. The old men were very large, and to see the whole troop scuttle towards the hills with the babies on their mothers' backs, with their little arms clinging round their necks, was a pretty and novel sight. Arriving at the caves, we found a long sand cliff projecting many yards over the lower

part, affording shelter for several hundred families, perfectly secure and a safe retreat—but its ancient inhabitants are passed away and forgotten. We procured some very beautiful specimens of the trap-door spider; the workmanship of the door and its hinge, and the lining of the passage down to their nest is something marvellous. So far as I have discovered, there are three kinds of this species, distinguished by their size. The largest is a black spider, the body nearly an inch in length; the opening, or passage, and the door to their nest is the size of our English florin; the hole to the nest is perpendicular for from a foot to two feet, when an open space is beyond. The coating of this opening and the under side of the door is of a greyish white, and as soft and smooth as satin, and when the door is shut it fits so exactly as to be quite water-tight. The top of the door is made to represent the ground round about, to be undistinguishable by an enemy. The second size trap-door is the size of a shilling, and the third the size of a four-penny-bit. But the spiders are of the same type; where one kind is found in a district the others are not, showing they occupy separate localities. I have frequently found the door open and thrown back, showing the spider is abroad hunting up game to supply his larder. On several occasions when finding these doors open I have watched the return of the spider, sitting down a few feet from the door, and

waited sometimes nearly half an hour. Presently he will be seen coming along in great haste. On arrival at the door he looks down for a few seconds, as if to listen if all is right below; then he makes a small circuit round, again approaching; this time he goes in a few inches, then out, and another inspection of the locality, back again, and down into his nest, where he remains about two minutes, out he comes on to the top, looks round, then goes in, turns round and puts out one of his fore-legs, takes hold of the door and pulls it close down over him, and when shut it is difficult to see where it is. Frequently I have watched these spiders (three kinds) when they have left their doors open, and invariably the same cautious movements have been adopted on returning home. There are other spiders very similar in form and size to the above; they make their nests and passages down after the same fashion, but with no trap-door, the entrance being quite open and exposed. Another peculiar spider, common in these parts, is the two-headed spider, with two mandibles; they are the largest I have seen, two inches in length, with six legs, and of a greenish brown colour. They are night spiders, and the Bushmen tell me their bite is death. This may, or may not, be true; I had no desire to try. The number that must be hidden in the ground in the day must be legion. When I have had my camp-fire at night, on an open piece of ground near

which I have been sitting, after hunting, hundreds of spiders and creeping things, as also moths, are drawn to it for warmth and light; amongst them are these two-headed monsters, seen running about, and finally become destroyed by rushing into the burning embers. I found their retreat during the day by a pet meercat, the long smooth-tailed kind, similar to the ichneumon. He would, on my outspanning, jump off the waggon and begin to smell the ground in all directions, and would frequently stop, begin to scratch with his fore-feet down two or three inches, poke his long nose into the hole, and bring out one of these spiders and devour it with evident relish. The ground being perfectly smooth with no aperture exposed, I could not discover how they could conceal themselves so cleverly. In some cases, I counted the number this little animal would find in a given space, when roughly hunting over the ground; it would average seventeen, in a surface ten feet square, and leaving probably as many in the ground. The tarantula is also very common, some of them the size of the palm of one's hand, well covered with long brown hair. A large camp-fire at night would draw the scorpions to it also, particularly if it should be made near a stone koppie. They grow to a great size. I have caught them from one inch to twelve inches in length. When young they are of a green colour, but full-grown they are black. The sting of the young ones, if on

the arm or leg, causes a numbness with a burning heat that may last a day, with no other bad symptoms. The sting of the full-grown ones must be dangerous ; the natives tell me it is death. The study of the insect-world is a life-long study in Africa alone, consequently my attention was only drawn to those kinds that took my special attention.

There is every indication that this country is drying up. Fountains that gave out fine springs of water, so the old Kaffirs told me, in their fathers' time, have not been known to flow for many years. This is a common remark all over the country, and there is evidence that it is so. Extensive pans, some more than a mile in circumference and 100 feet deep, with rocks or cliffs generally on the north-east side, with sandy bottoms, are now without water, when evidently they must have been full at some time. From the long drought, seven or eight months of the year, it cannot become a corn-growing country to any extent. The greater portion of the ground is of that stony and rocky nature it is incapable of growing anything but a coarse grass that suits cattle, but not sheep. A farm of 3000 morgan, or 6000 acres, will not maintain throughout the year more than 200 head. That is where water is on the farm, otherwise that number of cattle can only be maintained for seven months out of the year.

The northern border of Griqualand West, on the  
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north of the Campbell Randt, is a fine country for grazing and keeping cattle. There is more permanent water, the district being limestone. From Daniel's Kuil, where there is a singular cave, and between Neat's fountain, Marsaipa and Boetsap, is now laid out into farms. Fourteen years ago I frequently hunted the ostrich all through that region. Lions and wolves would visit me every night. Bushmen also were found, but of late years they have disappeared. An old Bushman at that time told me one evening many tales of his escapes from lions, and one of his brothers, only a few months before, was seized by a lion in the arm, when he had the presence of mind to take a handful of sand and throw it in the lion's eyes, when he let go, and the Bushman made his escape before the lion had recovered from the pain and surprise, then gave a roar and bounded away. I saw his brother a few days afterwards and the marks of the teeth on the arm. A similar occurrence happened in the desert when I was there four years before. A lion had seized a Bushman in a similar way, when he could manage to reach the hind part and squeeze his leg, when the lion gave a roar and sprang away. Many other such tales I have heard from these children of the desert of lions leaving the victim they have seized. I have met with three kinds of wolves in these parts : the tiger-wolf, *hyena striata*, the largest kind, the striped hyena, a large animal, and the maned

hyena, the small kind. The wolf-hyena is the most numerous.

Porcupine-hunting is very good sport at night when the moon gives a good light. They visit the Kaffir gardens, when the corn is getting forward. The plan is to go in with a few dogs, and several Kaffirs with sticks; the dogs drive the porcupines about, when they come near a good rap with the stick on their nose soon kills them, but care must be taken they do not run back and plant some of their quills into your legs, for they make dangerous wounds.

The old Bushmen tell me they recollect when all the large game was plentiful over the whole of this part of Griqualand West, north of the Vaal and Orange rivers, and also the hippopotami were found in them. The Blood Kaffirs, along the lower part of the Orange, also tell me there is one at the present time to be seen occasionally.

The flora in these parts, in the spring and through the summer, is an interesting study alone. Some of the flowers are perfectly crimson, others of a deep purple, the creepers, with their rich scarlet flowers, climbing up amongst the bushes, and long yellow pods, make the veldt interesting. The Vaal bush is the most common in this province; it flowers in the winter, and has a pleasant perfume; the tea made from its leaves is an excellent tonic. Many of the Bechuanas live in small kraals along the Campbell Randt, the

Harts river, and at Great and Little Boetschap and possess many waggons and spans of oxen, supplying the people at the Diamond Fields with vegetables, corn, cattle, and also wood from their forests, to keep the machinery at work. The general altitude of this part of the country is 4300 feet above sea-level. This is the cause of grass being more coarse throughout the interior of South Africa than it is at a lower level, and why winters are colder than they would be, the south latitude being only 28°.

Griqualand at the present time is as much occupied by a white population as any part of the Cape Colony, and, from its being the great diamond centre, has now become the most extensive and business part of South Africa; millions of pounds change hands annually, where fifteen years ago it was a howling wilderness.

## CHAPTER VI.

The Bechuana family—Their division into tribes—Their past and present condition.

THAT portion of Bechuanaland between the territory belonging to the chief Montsoia, which is on the north, and Griqualand West, is occupied by several chiefs belonging to this family. Monkuruan claims to be the paramount chief over many of them, others claim their independence. When the British Government annexed the Diamond Fields, they acknowledged this chief to be the head of the Bechuana over all that country. Previous to that time, Mahura, uncle to Monkuruan, ruled; at his death, his nephew became chief, and lived at his chief town, situated on one of the spurs of the Campbell Rantz, called Taung, or Toane, a large Kaffir station, close to a small branch of the Harts river, above its junction, containing a population, at the time I first visited the country, under 2000. Monkuruan and his people belong to the Batlapin tribe of the Bechuana family. He has several large kraals, where his people live. Another chief,

Botlatsitsi, son of the old Chief Gasebone, lives at Phokwane, about eighteen miles from Taung, on the south side of Harts river. He and his people belong to the same tribe as Monkuruan.

The town, or kraal, is very pleasantly situated amongst the hills, which are thickly covered with low underwood. The other petty captains, living within the country first described, are Moshette, of the Baralong tribe, who, with his people, live about nine miles from Taung, at Kunanna; the Chief Matlabane, of the Bamairi branch of the Batlapin tribe, whose kraal is six miles from Taung, on the hills about it.

The chief Matlibe and his people live at Taung, and they are of the Batlapin tribe also. The petty captain, Jantze, of the Batlapin, previous to the annexation of the Diamond Fields, lived at a large kraal, Lekatlong, on the banks of the Harts river, near its junction with the Vaal, but afterwards he removed, with his people, to Myneering, about thirty miles south of Kuruman. Young Gasebone lived at Dekong, on the same branch as that passing Taung, which I recollect perfectly well, for he stole out of my waggon thirty pounds of coffee, on my third visit there, in 1869, and then politely offered to drive my waggon through a very stony drift on my leaving his station. At Kuruman is Moshette. At Bakclaris, which is eighteen miles on the north from Kuruman, is the Chief Barhakie, and brother to Moshette. To the north, eighty miles from

Bakclaris, is Morequerne, where there are three petty captains, Makobie, Makutse, and Marketchwar, an old blind man; his people told me he was more than 100 years old, but they do not understand age; he died shortly afterwards.

Eighteen miles to the north-west of Morequerne is Conge, another large station, which is on the border of the Kalahara desert; and to the west, and south, towards Kuruman, is the kraal at Mynyam, near Honey Vlei, a large sheet of water. Cooe station is to the west of the Vlei, but near it, forty miles south, is Tsinin station; Comopere twelve miles south of the last, and twelve miles west of Bakclaris. On the east again we come to several kraals—Matetong, Kopong, and Tokong are the principal. There are many others of less note, all with their head-men. On the west of Kuruman, under the Langberg range of mountains, are Gamapoope, Molanwan, Kamasap, Puruhulu, Tuten, Lukin, and Zitburn. One of the chiefs is Tatu. Consequently, all this part of the country is thickly populated by the Bechuana family, all under petty chiefs and captains.

South of Kuruman is Kobis, Koning, Myneering, and Marseipa, and with their outlying posts for cattle, sheep, and bucks, make it an important and valuable region for the British Government to protect and secure from foreign invasion, as it is contiguous to Griqualand West along the whole of its northern

border. The extent of this portion of Bechuanaland above-named, south of the chief Montsioa territory, is from the Transvaal on the east, to Langberg on the west—200 miles by nearly 200 north and south—or 40,000 square miles. And when I first knew the country, twenty years ago, it was nearly unknown to the white man, except the missionaries, who had their stations at Kuruman, Lekatlong, Bakclaris, and Matetong, and some half-dozen traders passing through Kuruman, from Hope Town, in the Cape Colony, to the Bechuana chiefs living to the north. This little-known region then, was one of the most pleasant and agreeable parts of Africa to visit and explore. The natives, more particularly at Kuruman and those to the north, were most friendly and kind. Like all native tribes, they do not forget to beg of the white man. Down towards the south, in Mahura's time, the people were troublesome, and much less civil in their behaviour to strangers. I think I experienced more annoyance because they took me to be a Boer, noting down all their watering-places, and on one occasion I was in great danger in consequence. Skins well brayed was the only material for their clothes; the men had long cloaks, which, when thrown over the shoulders, reached the ground. The women had short wrappers round their loins, hanging down behind and very scanty in front; in cold weather they also had leather mantles. But at the present time

they have to a great extent adopted the European mode of dress, and deal extensively in almost every kind of English merchandise.

From cultivating little or no corn, which was the woman's work, they now go in extensively for ploughs, which the men use, and instead of growing mealies, which is maize or Indian corn, and a few melons, they now produce wheat, barley, and oats, which they grow in their beautiful valleys and sell to traders for English goods, and in addition they breed herds of cattle, goats and sheep. Many of the men buy the best English clothing, and some of the women, particularly the young ones, indulge in cotton prints and even silk for their dresses, and are very proud if they can obtain stylish boots.

The schools also have greatly improved the people. The advance in civilization within the last twenty years has been remarkable. They are as a people, timid and far from being fond of war. Their language is Sechuanæ which is soft and pleasant to the ear. They have natural mechanical talent, and make good carpenters, smiths, and masons. Their houses show great ingenuity in their construction, particularly in the formation and design of their granaries for storing their winter corn, which are quite artistic in form. Many of these are built up in the centre of a large hut made of clay, shaped like our water-bottles, in diameter ten feet in the largest part, gradually reduced

in size to three feet at the top, total height ten feet, which will hold many hundred bushels of corn. No mice, snakes, or other animal can get in to destroy the grain. A store is kept separate for each family, quite distinct from their living huts.

They are very expert in metal, melting the ore for the manufacture of ornaments, assagais, Kaffir picks, and such things as they require. They also make very neat mantles, karoses and other kinds of materials for the women, the men being the tailors and dress-makers for the tribe. Time being no object, their work is beautifully executed, as may be seen from the karoses brought to England, many of them sold as high as ten pounds. They are also very fond of music; they make various kinds of instruments which produce pleasing sounds. The young men form themselves into bands to the number of twenty to thirty, called the reed band, reeds from six to eight feet in length with holes similar to the flute, but held upright in front of each musician, forming a circle like our military bands, and perform tunes. The women and children walk round on the outside singing and clapping hands in time to the music. This performance generally begins about sun-down, and is kept up for several hours.

The interior of their huts and yards outside where they cook, which are surrounded by a high fence made of sticks, are kept remarkably clean and tidy, and their

iron utensils also receive their share of attention. Many of these Bechuanas are rich in cattle, sheep, and goats. They have their cattle-posts away in the bush, where the stock is looked after, cows milked, and once or twice a week a pack-ox is loaded up with skins of milk and taken to the kraal for use. These "vieh-posts" are in charge of their slaves called Vaalpans. They are the Bushmen of the country kept in subjection by the Bechuana tribe, and are a very harmless and quiet people, the only drawback to their liberty being they cannot leave their masters' service, otherwise they have full liberty of action. They are of a darker colour and different in form to the Cape Bushmen.

The Bechuanas throughout South Central Africa possess waggons, and have spans of oxen and everything complete like the Colonists, and go trading with English goods amongst their neighbours like any white trader. They also bring down from their homes, wood, corn, and vegetables for sale to the Diamond Fields, and are far more beneficial and useful in the country than the Boers. They are outstepping them in civilization, and if they had white skins, would be looked upon as a superior race. They have been kept down for want of opportunity to rise above their present condition. This extensive race, as I have already stated, extends from the Cape Colony to the Zambese, throughout the whole of Bechuanaland, and

are in habit and customs the same wherever they live, the same language and its dialects.

The females, like all other nations of the world, have their fashions, and vary according to the country in which they live. Some of the young girls shave all the wool from their heads except on the crown, leaving about three inches in diameter, which they anoint with red clay, plumbago, and grease, giving a very sparkling and shining appearance to it, that is very becoming and even makes the young girls look pretty, as many of them at that age have a pleasing and intellectual expression ; their short kilt is so arranged that the upper and lower borders should have the white fringe of hair of the springbok skin to look like a border of deep lace, which against the light rich brown hair of the other part is very becoming, and sets the figure off to great advantage. They quite understand being complimented upon their good looks, and can carry on a flirtation with admirable tact. Where this is more perceptible, is far away from the demoralizing influence of other tribes who have come in contact with the Boers and other white people. The more isolated they are from such influence, the more I have always found them respectful in their manner to strangers. I am referring to the Bechuana family in general.

The principal roads through this part of the country to the interior, pass through Hope Town in the Cape

Colony to Kuruman, the mission-station where the Rev. Robert Moffat spent forty-five years of his life in missionary labour, which station has been largely increased by the addition of an extensive college erected of late years at a great expense for the teaching of native youths for missionary purposes. The site is admirably situated, having an unlimited supply of the purest water from a spring some few miles above the station, which issues from a cave in the side of the hill in a picturesque locality. The mission houses and church of the London Missionary Society are substantial and well-built, and have fine gardens well stocked with fruit trees, and the orange and lemon grow to great perfection. Mr. Chapman, who has a large store, takes great interest in his garden, and grows every kind of vegetable known in England. Twenty years ago there were several stores; three at Upper Kuruman, about a mile from the mission station.

The bold outline of the lofty range of hills at the back of Kuruman, distant some six miles, adds greatly to the beauty of the adjoining country, which is undulating and well-wooded, with open plains and Kaffir gardens, and is one of the most healthy parts of South Central Africa. The roads from Kuruman branch off in every direction to the several natives' towns. The main transport road from Kuruman and Diamond Fields, goes to Maceby Station on the Molapo, in the

Chief Montsoia territory, and very pretty roads to travel over. On leaving the station there are several small kraals on the road to Kopong, which is a large native town situated on the Matlarin, a tributary of the Kuruman river, which latter flows past Bakclaris, and then south, past Comopere, from thence through a wild uninhabited country for 180 miles, where it joins the Hygap river, which is the lower portion of the Molapo. The main road continues on from Kopong, through a fine forest of kameeldoorn-trees for many miles, then enters upon open veldt, passing little and great brack-pans to the Sitlecoole and Moretsane rivers, then bush again to Macebay's station Pitsan ; the distance between Kuruman and that town is 154 miles. Several roads branch off from it to different parts ; one goes to Melemas on the Molapo, another to Marico, and also others to Monkuruan's at Taungs. Maamuosa, where the Koranna Captain Mushoen and his people live, a bad and wicked tribe, who have been helping the Boers lately to make war on Monkuruan, and whose land the Boers have taken from him. The principal main transport-road from the Cape Colony and Diamond Fields, runs direct to Taungs in a north-east direction to Maceby's and then north, which has by the late Convention with the Transvaal been preserved. There are no very lofty hills in this part of Bechuanaland. The principal ones are those at Kuruman, those near Taungs and

Swaatberg. The average elevation is about 4600 feet above sea-level. The northern portion is more open, extensive plains and forests of the mimosa-tree; and has many brack-pans, where in the summer wild geese and ducks come in great numbers.

The game when I first travelled through these parts, swarmed on the open flats. Bles- and springbok, hartebeest, quaggas, gnus or wildebeest, the black and the blue; the latter is a much finer animal, the skin is also of more value. The koodoo is found in the hills. Then there are several other antelopes, such as the steinbok, found all over Africa. These at the time I state, if it were possible to count them, would exceed 100,000 to be seen from the waggon at one time, a complete forest of horns, and as they feed off the grass until it is too short, they move away to another district. Of course lions, wolves, and jackals were very numerous and kept up their howls all night. The wild dog (*Hyena venatica*) could be seen in packs of several hundred, crossing the plains in pursuit of game—they are a pretty animal with large rounded ears, large bushy tail, whitish face, long black and white hair, tall and slender. They always hunt in packs. On one of my journeys, having to cross these plains, I came upon several hundred of them in one of the slight hollows. On nearing them, for the road ran directly past where they had been having a grand feast off springbok, as remains of them were still

unconsumed, some of them were lying in the road I was travelling, and would hardly get out of my way, others stood looking as we passed between them. Fortunately they had been having their meal, otherwise I think my span of oxen would have fared badly, for there must have been over 300. With so many making an attack on a span of oxen, guns would have been of little use, if they were hungry. I have often seen forty and fifty in a pack in full cry, after bles- or springbok, and a beautiful sight it is. Wolves also were seen, seven and eight together.

At a small pan on these plains, in a hollow, with high reeds surrounding it, I, one afternoon, out-spanned, intending to remain there the night, as there was an extensive pan near, with very steep banks down to it, where I intended, the next day, to look for ancient implements, as I had previously found some there before. I sent one of my Kaffir boys down to this pan, only a short distance from the waggon, for water. He was very quickly back, looking quite scared, and cried out there were wolves in the pan.

Our rifles were soon out of the waggon, and cartridges for a few shots if necessary. I started with my Bushman and Hottentot driver, all armed. As he said, the pan seemed full of them; when within fifty yards, some of the wolves broke cover and were making for some bushes; two were shot, others escaped

at the sound of our rifles. We could see them moving about in the long reeds, and fired at every opportunity, killing in all seven; four of them were the largest I had ever seen; their heads were immense, and between the ears measured seven inches. They are large and powerful animals, but great cowards. Lions would be heard nightly round the waggon, whenever I outspanned in one particular district near the Moretsane or Sittlecoole rivers, which seemed a favourite resort for them.

All this state of things has passed away. The game has been shot and driven away more into the desert, wolves nearly all poisoned, and in crossing any of those extensive plains and open flats, a few hundred may be counted, where before tens of thousands covered the veldt in all directions. Then it was a great pleasure to travel through the country for sport alone, in addition to the enjoyment of passing through a beautiful country teeming with game. At the present time, to pass over the same ground with not a living thing to be seen, it becomes monotonous. Close to that pretty isolated hill, Swaatberg, are the ruins of a very ancient town, Kunam; whether built by Kaffirs or the race that built the other stone huts, mentioned in a previous chapter, there is no history to prove. There are many strange tales handed down to the present generation of its being one large town, the seat of a

powerful chief, and of some great battles having been fought there. The ruins indicate it to have been at some remote period a large town. Near it are extensive pans, that at one time must have held water to a great depth, as the banks and cliffs clearly prove; now only in the summer months water is found in them. Not far from them there are some dried-up springs, the water of which was conveyed away by a sluit passing into the Moretsane.

One day we had fixed our camp at a very pretty spot close to some fine trees and bush, had made all fast for the night, and were sitting by the fire before going to bed, the Kaffir boys having their supper, when we were startled by a rush of large animals passing close to our camp fires, on both sides of us. The night being very dark, we could only distinguish, by the light from our fire, that an immense herd of blesbok was amongst us. We had our rifles in hand in a moment and fired into a dense mass of them. When they passed away we found three dead upon the ground. My Hottentot and boys ran to bring them in, when a solitary blesbok rushed up to the fire and there stood quite exhausted, and some thirty yards in the rear were several animals moving about, but I could not distinguish, from the flickering light, if wolves or wild dogs, that had chased the poor animal until it could run no more. We all ran out with our rifles, but with caution, in case any lions

might be amongst them. As they did not go away, evidently exhausted also with the long chase, we had a good chance of getting some. We succeeded in killing two. The others in the meantime made off. Lighting the lantern to bring them in, we found them to be very fine and powerful wild dogs. By this time the blesbok had recovered from the hard run, and took himself off. My driver wanted to kill him, but I said, "No; he sought our protection, and he shall have it." It is wonderful they should seek man's protection when all other hope of self-preservation seems gone. I have known small birds fly to my waggon and into it, on several occasions when pursued by hawks. This is more than instinct; there is some reasoning power in animals when they seek shelter from foes where they know they will not follow them. Foxes we know act in the same manner.

In the morning, on examining the spoor, there must have been many wild dogs engaged in the chase, but they were stopped at the sight of the two fires and waggons, and our shots at the blesbok as they passed us. In the small grove of trees under which our camp was pitched, we found several very large chameleons measuring fifteen inches in length. We discovered them by hearing a noise on one of the branches, caused by a fight between two of the largest, which we caught, but gave them their liberty before

leaving. I also, during my explorations, made a collection of many kinds of the mantis family, commonly called in Africa, Hottentot gods, as they always appear to be praying, having their two arms held as if in that act; their four legs are used for locomotion. They feed themselves with their hands. I made a collection of forty-seven different kinds, those with wings and those wingless, both kinds having well-developed bodies. Then there is a third kind without bodies, called walking-sticks, each kind having four legs, two arms and hands. I made twenty-two collections of the winged, the largest measured eleven inches in length, brown bodies and lovely purple wings, two on each side, two horns on the head a little over an inch in length, large eyes, with a mouth similar to a wasp's, with flat head and neck four inches in length, from the lower part of which the two arms spring. The four legs were fixed in the centre of the body; the smallest size with wings measured one and a half inches in length; each size differed somewhat in shape. I put one of these, which measured six inches, green on the back and yellow underneath, with silvery wings, into a paper-collar box. One afternoon on looking at it half an hour afterwards, I found it had woven a nest on to the side, composed of silky and light brown material, and the insect appeared quite dead or in a torpid state. Putting the box away, I forgot to look at it for several months; when I opened the box I

found upwards of 200 young ones, all dead, each about one-eighth of an inch in length. The greater portion of my specimens I caught in my waggon at night when my candle was burning and my fore-sail up, being like the moths attracted by the light. The wingless ones I found on bushes or in the grass. The third kind, the walking-stick, I always found in the grass. The first time I caught one was when I was collecting some beetles. I saw, as I thought, a piece of live grass moving along. Sitting down on the ground to watch it, I found it had four legs, which moved very slowly, and two in front that stuck straight out in line with the body. Carefully observing its movements, I saw at once it was a very strange kind of insect. Taking a piece of grass to lift it from the ground, the thing showed fight at once by raising its head, opening and shutting its mouth, drawing up its two long arms from the straight position, and striking out at the grass I held to its head. The colour was exactly that of the long dry grass in which it was moving—yellow. Length of body and neck, fourteen inches, and the size of a small straw; the legs were very long—five inches; the knee-joint half-way up; the arms had two joints—the regular elbow, and two-thirds of the distance another that doubled up, so that it could pick the food and carry it to its mouth. These again vary in size and colour from one inch in length to the size above described. The female is

much larger than the male, which is a light brown, the former of a sea-green colour. I think the mantis and the trap-door spider the most curious of the insect world in South Africa. Many specimens of moths I collected in my waggon after dark, some of them very beautiful; the larger kinds I mostly found in the long grass on the plains.

Butterflies were very plentiful in some parts, in others rarely any would be seen; each locality had its peculiar species. The wasps also amused me when standing in any particular locality for some time; the large black with purple wings was a constant visitor. When about making a nest to lay their eggs, they would fly into my waggon, examine every part minutely, and after fixing upon a particular corner, would fly away and return with a ball of mud the size of a pea, and commence to plaster the side of the waggon fixed upon. This would go on for two or three days, the two wasps, male and female, bringing in these little balls of mud, going and returning every minute until it was completed, leaving a little circular hole to each cavity in the clay nest, one-eighth of an inch in diameter when so completed. They would commence with one of the holes, there being five; the female would deposit the eggs, then the two would go out and return with a green caterpillar each, which they would push into the hole containing the eggs, then leave and return with balls of clay, and plaster

up the hole so cleverly that it would be impossible to find it from the outside. The same labour was bestowed upon the other compartment of the nest, and when completed would be left for time to bring forth the young. Two other kinds of wasps were of quite a different shape, their slender bodies extended for half an inch, leaving a large egg-shaped ball at the end. These made exactly the same form of nest as the one described. A fourth kind, I noticed, would build their nest in the roofs of buildings ; these would be suspended by a thin stem of a glutinous nature, upon which would be fixed from five to twenty cells similar to those of the bee. There have been eight and ten of all these kinds of nests in my waggon at one time, and during the intense heat of the weather,  $106^{\circ}$  and sometimes  $116^{\circ}$  in the shade, being too hot to move about, I have amused myself in watching the methodical way in which they so cleverly and beautifully completed their work, and in so short a time. The bees generally make their nests in old hollow trees, which we discovered through the honey-bird leading us to one. When one of these birds wants to attract attention, it soon makes its presence known, and becomes impatient, if not attended to, flying round about with its little twitter and call, which is well known. When it sees you are following it, it flies from branch to branch in a straight line to the nest ; when there, it stops, and you soon see the nest.

The Kaffir will go fearlessly to work, the bees buzzing about him when taking out the honeycomb, he rarely being stung.

The common black crow, with white about the neck, is also a friendly bird, of the same size as our English. They generally come and settle near the outspan, waiting for the camp to break up, then come and look for what may be left. They talk in their throat as well as caw, and can be taught like a parrot to speak. I tamed a young one ; he would not sleep in the waggon, but early in the morning he would come and settle on the front part of the waggon, where he could raise the fore-sail to look in. On seeing me in bed he would come in, hop up to my face, take hold of my nose, or have a peck at my beard, look round to examine the things hanging on the sides, then hop out. On my getting up and leaving the waggon he would be seen flying from some tree, and come and settle on my hat or shoulder ; if the latter, he would put his head round and rub his beak against my face.

There are other crows quite black, more like ravens, but not so large. Another time I was staying at a Boer farm for three weeks to have my waggon repaired ; in the early day I walked over to a Boer farm, about a mile from my outspan, to examine some quartz reefs, where I found a few specks of gold on a former journey. At this farm there was a beautiful crane, belonging to old John Nell, the farmer. I

tried to make friends by making the same kind of sounds that he kept repeating, but he took no apparent notice. On leaving to walk back to the waggon with my rifle, this crane followed me all the way, keeping about three yards behind, where he remained by my camp a short time, then flew home. Every day after he paid me a visit. One afternoon I took my rifle for a ramble round in the thick bush veldt to look for a waterbok. When about a mile from my waggon I heard a great rush. Looking round I found it was my friend the crane. He settled down in front, then came and walked on my left side, just beyond my reach, keeping close for some distance, then on a sudden he took flight and rose in the air, making long circular sweeps, until he passed behind some small clouds and became again visible, until he was lost in the distance. Thinking no more of him, I continued my walk for half an hour, and was returning home when the same kind of rush was heard, and looking up I saw him pass close to me, and settle on the ground about thirty yards in front; he then took his place by my side as before, and accompanied me home, and then flew back to the farm. I mention these incidents to show there is something more than instinct in all living things.

The country round this part of Mankoroan territory, and in fact all Africa, swarms with every kind of ant, from the smallest size up to three-quarters of an inch

in length, each kind having their own peculiar form of nest, more particularly the destructive white ant, which causes so much damage to buildings and furniture ; the construction of their nests differs in different latitudes. In the Cape Colony, Natal, Orange Free State, and lower part of the Transvaal, the veldt is covered with these hills, in the shape of a ball cut in halves and placed on the ground ; the average size is four feet in diameter by two feet in height ; many of them have been scooped out by ant-bears.

The Dutch women, in travelling, frequently make use of these holes, by turning them into ovens to bake their bread for the road. More to the north, instead of being round, they form a kind of peak, with holes on the topmost points, some exceeding in height twenty feet. North of this again the ground is raised some two feet by ten to fifteen in diameter. On the centre part chimneys are built up, many exceeding four feet in height, by nearly three feet in circumference ; the opening is nearly a foot in diameter, the top terminating in a cup-like form, in three distinct layers, one above the other, forming quite an ornamental termination to the chimney beautifully constructed. On looking down, hundreds of these tiny masons may be seen plastering and repairing the inside coating, which may have received damage from rain. There is always one large chimney, and sometimes one or two smaller ones close to it, and at the base some twenty or

thirty small ones, three inches to a foot in height, and three and four inches in diameter, and many small holes round about, where the ants are busy taking in their food, small pieces of dried grass, and other things, never making use of the chimneys as a means for supplying their cells with food. They are, I believe, erected as ventilators to give air below, as the cavity beneath must be as large as a small room, and in some cases larger, as on one occasion a waggon fell into one, and I was nearly meeting the same fate. A road had been made near Molapo, over one of these disused nests, and in 1877 a Boer waggon was travelling in the night, as is their usual practice. The front oxen had gone over it, the ground gave way with the after oxen, but they managed to get on firm ground; the weight of the waggon broke the top surface, and only the deselboom on the opposite side getting fixed, kept the two fore-wheels and waggon suspended over the hole, a Boer woman and three children narrowly escaping from falling into the pit. I followed up the next morning, when the Boer and others were getting the waggon mended; bushes were then put round the hole and the road turned. If I had passed over this road before that waggon I should have met the same fate. As a whole, the roads in all parts of Mankoroan territory, and in fact throughout South Central Africa, are very good, considering they are never repaired; many of them rough and stony, but as they are mere

natural tracks made by waggons, it is surprising they are in such good condition.

The population of this district, including all the various tribes, does not exceed 20,000, exclusive of Bushmen, and they do not number more than 3000.

## CHAPTER VII.

## BECHUANALAND.

The territory of the Chief Montsioa, of the Baralongs.

THIS country is situated on the north of Mankoroan. The boundaries are common to both, from the Transvaal, down west to that range of mountains running north, the continuation of the Langberg ; beyond is the Kalahara Desert, of which this western portion forms part. Its northern boundary joins the chief Gaseitsive, and the Transvaal is on the east. The length from east to west is 200 miles, and from north to south seventy miles. The Malapo, or the Mafiking river, rises in the Transvaal, flows west, through the entire length of this territory, continuing on in the same direction, receiving the two dry rivers, the Nosop and Onp, then turns south at the great bend, under the name of Hygap, and enters the Orange at Kakaman's Drift ; there are but few branches in its course. The eastern portion of this country is valuable and productive, suitable for any kind of vegetation.

When the British Government settled the Keats award boundary, they confirmed Montsioa's title to the ground on the west of it. At that time, 1871, Montsioa and many of his people were living at Moshanen, a Kaffir station in Gaseitsive's territory, situated eighteen miles to the west of Kanya, the seat of that chief. But after the settlement of the award he removed down to his own country, and settled at his town, Sehuba, which has since been burnt by the Boers, and was six miles south of the Molapo river, and the same distance from the large kraal on its banks, under the petty chief Melema, at Mafiking, who was his nephew; and eighteen miles below, and on the river, was the large kraal under Maceby.

The population numbered some 35,000 souls, including the Kuruman district; but since the Transvaal Boers have made war on these people, after the retrocession of that state, nearly half have been killed and made prisoners.

The country has fine grazing-lands, and some parts are well wooded. There are extensive vleis and pans; the people cultivate corn extensively, use ploughs, and had large herds of cattle, sheep, and goats, now stolen by the Boers.

Montsioa belongs to the Baralong tribe of the Bechuana family; he and his people have always been loyal to the English Government, and during the

Transvaal rebellion many loyal Boers fled to him for protection, and were hospitably received. The people are in their habits and customs similar to those in Mankoroan's country. Montsioa is a quiet, well-disposed chief, and has been cruelly used by the Boers for his loyalty to England; one of his sons, and most of his brave men, have been shot down like dogs, and his women and their children killed in cold blood, and many of them taken into captivity, all for keeping true and loyal. He has been shamefully and disgracefully forsaken, and left to battle alone against these murdering freebooters, who were supported by the Transvaal Government, and supplied with guns and ammunition to carry on their unholy war, and now he has lost the greater portion of his people, and nearly all his cattle and property. The British Government, moved by the voice of the English people and our loyals at the Cape, at the eleventh hour sent out a force under Major-General Sir Charles Warren, to see justice done him. Will they compel the Boers to return the stolen property, and the women and children they have taken into the Transvaal as slaves, for they will be nothing less? Will they deliver up the murderers of Mr. Bethel and others? Never was a more cruel and unjust war made against people than this, by a people professing Christianity, who have, by their cold-blooded and atrocious acts, stamped themselves as a nation of murderers and robbers, and for such acts they are not

worthy of retaining the Transvaal as an independent country. It is useless for that Government to deny any complicity in these wars, they are well known to have been the promoters—there is evidence sufficient to prove this. I was told by some of the influential Boers in Pretoria, soon after peace was restored, and the first convention made, in July, 1881, that they intended to go and punish Montsioa and Mankoroan, by driving them out of their territories and taking their land, for their loyalty to England in protecting loyal Boers. As they stated, "We will not have these natives on our border who have helped you English," showing what their intention was as soon as they were confirmed in their republic. I have deemed it necessary to state these facts, that the English people may know in any future dealings with whom they have to meet.

In the settlement of the Keats award the land was confirmed to Montsioa. There is an extensive hill of metamorphic formation on his eastern boundary, but which may now be included in the Transvaal by the recent convention, which has in its centre, on the summit, the remains of an extinct volcano; the vent is about 700 yards in diameter, the highest point is 5650 feet above sea-level, and stands on the central watershed. There is an opening for the escape of the lava, which appears to have travelled some miles down a valley on the south-east. This lava, or boiling

mud has several vents on the exterior, the central opening is level, and on one side many bones are embedded in the rock. It is an interesting formation.

The western division of Montsioa's territory is more open on the south side of the Molapo river, but more wooded on the northern. It was one of my favourite hunting-grounds in my early visits, as game at that time swarmed over those extensive plains, and with a horse they were easily shot; but it was dangerous riding, as there are so many wolf-holes, ant-bear, porcupine, armadillo, spring-hare, and meer-cats, partly hidden by long grass, that a horse at full speed cannot always escape them, which frequently ends in a broken collar-bone or a broken rifle. Many of the antelope species are very subject to bransick, and hundreds die; their bones may be seen lying about in every direction, consequently it is a great resort for vultures and eagles, who are constantly on the look-out for those who have not many days to live. If a wildebeest or blesbok has this complaint, and is not likely to live many days, he is found standing alone, and surrounded by half a hundred of these birds waiting patiently till he drops, then they commence upon him before he is quite dead, his eyes being first taken, and in less than half an hour there is very little left to be eaten. Many believe the vultures or eagles discover their food only by their splendid sight; my experience proves that scent has more to do with it. During my travels in

these wilds I have had almost daily opportunity of observing their mode of discovering any dead animal that may be exposed in the open. These birds are almost constantly on the wing ; the exception is when they have gorged until they can eat no more. They then rest on the ground or some stone koppie, until they have to some extent digested their food, to enable them to fly. Many times I have ridden up to them and given them a cut with my riding-whip to make them fly, which they are incapable of doing from over-feeding. When an animal dies, the scent is driven by the wind and ascends many thousand feet, and is carried along with it. If any of these birds are to be seen on the wing, they almost always fly in circles, making long sweeps in their course ; this will take up any scent that may be in the air. In watching them closely it is easy to see when they have got the scent, and when they lose it, as is often the case if they make too great a circle. There may be sometimes from 100 to 200 performing these graceful circular flights, some one way and some another. Being at a great altitude—1000 yards—when they smell the carrion, they are, if the wind is strong, more than a mile away from the animal, and as they fly round they gradually work up to windward, until the object is visible, then they do not come down at once, but appear to make a survey of the surroundings before coming down to feast on the carcass. I have many times seen them come down wind, pass directly over

a dead beast unnoticed, until they have got into the current of air on the down side, when they have worked back until they could see the animal on the ground. Their splendid sight will lead them to the spot after a time, but their quick sense of smell is the first indication that there is a grand feast for them.

Of all birds I think the vulture is the most graceful in its flight, with its immense wings, which measure from tip to tip seven and sometimes nine feet, extended without a movement as they circle in the air. One day I was out on foot after some blue wildebeest, with my rifle, near the dry pan Bakillara; I came upon about 100 of these birds, who were too late for a feast upon a buck, the bones of which had already been picked quite clean, when they took flight and disappeared. Knowing their habits so well, and that more would shortly come, I walked about 100 yards away to a wildebeest hole, which that animal scrapes to sleep in. There I laid down as if dead, putting my rifle out of sight; I wanted to see what they would do if they saw me. In about ten minutes several flew overhead to the dead animal, eyeing me as they passed, with their heads on one side, and about fifty yards over me; many of them commenced their circular flight to have another look to see if I were dead. Nearly half an hour was passed in this way without the slightest

movement on my part, when dozens of them began to settle on the ground forty yards away, but afraid to come nearer ; others would make a swoop down within a dozen yards of me and pass on ; when upwards of fifty had settled down, finding they would not come to pick my bones, and getting tired of my position, I jumped up with a great shout, when they took wing and in less than two minutes were out of sight.

The black eagle is more frequently seen here than in any other part of Africa, in consequence, I suppose, of food being plentiful. I shot one out of four that settled near my waggon one afternoon, when my driver was skinning a wolf he had shot. When sitting on the ground it measured two feet four inches to the shoulder, and its wings from tip to tip nine feet five inches. Two years ago I shot a white eagle ; the wings measured nearly ten feet. I tried to preserve them, but did not succeed.

All kinds of hawks, some very large, and the large horned owl are common in this part of the desert, as also some of the smaller species. Snakes also are plentiful : the most common is the puff-adder, which grows to a large size ; two I killed measured three feet each. The cobra-de-capello and also the python are common. One I shot measured sixteen feet two inches, but there are some larger. This one had an entire steinbok in it ; they are more numerous near Vleis. Lizards, salamanders, and many small snakes are seen

amongst the stones and rocks. Scorpions of a dark colour have been killed eleven inches in length.

This part of the country the greater part of the year is short of water, but in the Molapo it can be obtained by digging a few feet in the bed of the river, which is sand. If proper attention is paid to improvements, this part may be made valuable and productive.

Many Bushman families live on the north side of the river, of the Bakillihara tribe, quite distinct from the Masare Bushman. They have small cattle-posts belonging to the Bechuanas, but others are free, seldom stationary.

The old mission-station at Mosega, situate on a branch of the Klein Marico, was abandoned in 1852, as also Malatza, by the Revs. Ingles and Edwards, the Boers not allowing them to remain. All that portion of Montsioa's territory is quite equal to any part of the Cape Colony for richness of soil and growth of corn and vegetables, splendid grazing-land for cattle, and well supplied with water from fountains, with good roads. Several lions were killed on the Molapo twelve years ago ; two young ones were captured and brought up by M. Ludie, a Bastard, and afterwards sold for five pounds, and sent to England.

There were many Bastards at the time I first passed through, which I frequently had occasion to do on my journeys, and found them very civil and kind. Indeed,

it would be difficult to find a class of people more attentive and well disposed towards travellers than this class, so that it was quite a pleasure to meet them. They are good mechanics, and can repair a waggon as well as any colonial waggon-maker, as I have found when anything was required to be done to mine.

On the south of this territory, between it and the Transvaal, is that small slip of country under the petty captain Moshette, part of which is included in the Transvaal by the late Convention between the British Government and that Republic. This petty captain and the Koranna captain Moshoen have been the tools of the Transvaal Government to make war on Monkruuan and Montsioa, and it serves them right that they should lose their country. Moshoen lives at his large station at Maamuosa, situated on a white sandstone hill close to the Harts river; this stone is used by mill-owners for grinding their corn. The most unfrequented part of Montsioa's country is that through which the River Molapo runs, to the westward of Maceby's station, the course of which has already been described in the river system.

Eighteen years ago the plains swarmed with game, and lions also. I was travelling down from Kanya through the desert to Maceby, on my way to Conge kraal, north of Morequern. At Maceby's, there were Boers, each with a waggon, going to Morequern; the road I was travelling was the same. One of them,

whom I had met before, asked if we should trek together, which was agreed to, until the roads separated seventy-five miles on, the distance to Conge being 125 miles; the only objection I had, was that they travelled at night, but as there were some very nasty places along the road and we could assist each other in case of accident, I agreed. On the third night from Maceby's, we were travelling along over an open country, my waggon was the third in the line, and a Dutchman was the last, the night was stormy with a high wind, and very dark. Soon after inspanning in the evening, we knew lions were following us, but this occurs so often, that we took no notice of it. But about eleven o'clock, the oxen in all the waggons became very restless, and our forelopers had difficulty to keep them on the road, calling out that lions were close.

The Boer behind my waggon had no foreloper, there was only himself with the waggon, which was empty. I was sitting on my waggon-box with my driver and the foreloper, leading the oxen. Soon after eleven we heard the after-waggon and oxen leave the road and make a rush across the veldt, towards a dry bed of a river, and heard the Boer call out to us to stop, which we did as soon as I could make those in front understand the case. We held to, and listened, but heard no sound of the Boer or anything else. The wind and rain coming on, we three, with

our waggons, drew up in a line, and fastened the oxen to the trek-tow and waited until daylight, for it was useless and also very dangerous to go walking about in the veldt amongst low bushes, to look for the Boer or his waggon, where lions seemed to swarm ; besides we had as much as we could do to keep the lions from making an attack on our own oxen.

As soon as the first signs of daylight approached, the two Boers, a son, and myself, took our rifles and followed the spoor of the last waggon, which we found upset in the dry river, about 400 yards from the road, killing six of the oxen in the fall, and the other six had cleared themselves from their yokes, and strayed away out of sight, but no man was to be seen. Going back on the line the waggon took, we found the man's hat and some distance beyond his long ox-whip, and a little blood, not far from it. There was then no doubt about his disappearance ; the oxen had bolted, and the man to turn them on to the road had jumped off the waggon, when a lion had seized and carried him off. As the sun was now above the horizon, we gave orders for our boys to outspan, and then hastened on in the direction the lion's spoor showed us he had gone. There was here and there blood on the grass, which led to a small clump of bushes and stones ; here we found part of the remains and clothes, which were all torn to shreds, of the poor man, but no signs of the lions, for there must have been several by the

foot-prints in the sand. We sent to the waggon for a spade and buried the remains of what small portion was left, and then took up the spoor,—to settle accounts with the lions,—which followed along a dry water-course, which was crossed, and under a sand-bank with high grass, we came upon them, a lion and lioness, and a young one, comfortably reposing. The two Boers and myself,—all good shots,—made very short work of the affair, knowing what they had done. It was arranged not to fire until we could make a dead shot, and all to fire at the lion; two in the first instance, the third to be ready if he showed fight, whilst the other two reloaded; but as the Dutchmen's rifles carried heavy bullets,—eight to the pound,—their two shots did the work, for when the lion rose up to have a look at us, throwing back his ears and showing his teeth, both bullets entered his chest and he fell, but not quite dead; my third bullet in the region of his heart finished him. We then turned upon the lioness, who gave us much trouble before we could have an opportunity of a good shot; her endeavour was to escape, but this we could not quite agree to; however, a shot in the shoulder, and another in the neck, stopped her making any further attempt to get away, and enabled us to get up and complete the work. The Boers wanted the skins, which would delay us the day, therefore I went back to my waggon for breakfast, thinking it was no bad

bag for so early in the morning. But before doing so we searched every bush and cover for the young lion without success: but in the afternoon, when the two Kaffir boys were skinning the lioness, the young one was seen not far off, and the Kaffir shot him. We then went down to the river to see what could be done with the waggon, the dead oxen, and those that had strayed away into the bush. After a time they were found and brought back; the waggon was too much smashed to remove. It had fallen over a steep bank fifteen feet deep. The Boers wanted to save the skins and the flesh of the dead oxen, which would take time, and as I could do no more good I arranged to start the next morning. We all took care to collect plenty of wood for great fires to be kept alight, and it was well we did, for we were serenaded with the lions' music all the night; the surroundings seemed full of them, and also with wolves and jackals; the smell of the dead oxen brought them to our locality. However, bidding my friends good-bye, after breakfast I left for Conge. The second day after leaving them, we saw several lions as we passed along, but they were a long way from the waggon. In the afternoon, the next day, about 200 yards on our right from the road, we counted no less than seventeen large and small lions, some of them playing, others lying and sitting down; they took no notice of us, merely looked as we passed along, and we at

them. We made a long trek after that, to get as far as we could from them before night, for however pretty they are to look at in their wild and native home, their proximity to the waggon on a dark night is not conducive to a good night's rest. In four days after this we arrived at Conge, without seeing any more. I remained at this station two days, then left for Morequern. The chief and many of his people came to the waggon, with pumpkins, water-melons, milk, and eggs. I never met with a more quiet and orderly and well-behaved people than these Bechuanas. Very few traders visited these parts then. There was one after this who frequented this part of the country, and who blew himself up in his waggon, together with the missionary from Matetong and some twenty Kaffirs.

This was the last missionary that lived at that station, the house and grounds are in ruins, but there are some very fine willow-trees still standing planted by Messrs. Moffat and Campbell when the mission was first established.

Conge is eighteen miles from Morequern; the road the whole way is fearfully stony; a pan half-way is noted for Guinea-fowl. The next day I arrived at Morequern, where I had to repair my waggon. A large pan divides two large kraals, on the east side, an old blind chief lives; Makalawar or Makutse, a Baralong, and on the west, Maksetse.

As it would take some few days before the waggon

would be ready, and as all the people at these large stations had always been kind to me whenever I came amongst them, I determined to send out an invitation to all the young Kaffir girls and young Kaffirs to a big dance. They were to come in their full dress costume. The reed band was engaged. The performance was to wind up with a large ox roasted whole, to be washed down with Kaffir beer. Three o'clock was the appointed time, at a large open space by my waggon. Long before that I had half the people round me, including little children. The young girls came decked out with a profusion of beads worked upon well-brayed leather, forming aprons, bracelets, necklaces, in every variety of form and design, very beautifully executed; bands of beads round their woolly heads and long pendants of beads for earrings setting them off to great advantage, each coming to me to show their finery, and seeming delighted to be praised for their good looks and fine ornaments, for invariably when young they have beautiful figures and expressive features. The young men also came dressed in their best clothes. The old people, with their chief and his counsellors, came to look on. In all about 500 assembled to do honour to the feast, and great rejoicings and fun characterized the meeting. Two reed bands came, thirty in each. Dancing and music commenced at 4 p.m. and continued up to feeding-time, when the ox was sufficiently

roasted. Men were told off to cut up and divide it amongst the people. Nearly 100 little fires were made for parties to form round them, for Kaffirs can do nothing without a fire. Kaffir corn was cooked in pots in addition to the meat for their feast, and at 9 p.m. dancing, music, and talking recommenced with undiminished joyousness, whilst, to complete the evening, I had a scramble from my waggon of a variety of articles of use to them—handkerchiefs, tinder-boxes, knives, beads, and other things, which caused an immense amusement. At twelve o'clock I told them to go home, for I must sleep; and in less than ten minutes all was quiet. Everything passed off pleasantly. This reed band is a great institution with these people. The following night the young men met as usual with the band at their large kraal. The night was not dark, as the stars give great light in this latitude. When they were in full play, and the women and children going round the performers, singing and clapping of hands, each one wearing a long karos, which covered their figure, and a fur cap, their usual covering at night, I left my waggon, dressed like them, with a jackal karos and tiger-skin cap, which concealed my figure and face, walked down and joined in the dance, which was maintained for some time, all the men sitting or standing beyond the circle looking on. A little girl caught a glimpse of my white face, which

had become partly uncovered, when she screamed out and pointed to me. It was then no longer necessary to keep up the disguise; I therefore threw off my karos. When they saw who it was, they joined in the fun, laughing and clapping of hands, and I was made to sit down and have a good drink of Kaffir beer. The next night or evening, before sundown, there was a dance of the married women, about seventy, dressed up in all kinds of strange figures. This was to celebrate the return of about thirty young girls to their homes, and about the same number of young men, who had passed through certain ceremonies after the Jewish custom, before the boys are admitted into the ranks with the men, and entitled to carry arms in war; and the girls before they are allowed to marry.

This custom is at a particular season. One or two old medicine-men will take those boys who are to be admitted to manhood into some secluded glen, where they remain for two or three months isolated from the rest of the people, no one being allowed to go near them during that time, the old men looking after their food; and at the appointed time they are allowed to return to the kraal. The young men are painted over with white clay for a certain number of days after the ceremony. Two or more old women take the girls also to some remote place, and when they return they also are covered with white clay, and, in addition, wear a short kilt made of reeds or grass, and a band of the

same material crossing over the shoulders, meeting in front and behind, which are worn during a certain time at their kraals, when they assume their ordinary dress, and then are eligible to be chosen for wives. I was hunting one day near Cooe, and happened to ride down the river close upon a number of these girls and two old women, which caused a great commotion amongst them. I was told if they had caught me they were likely to kill me for trespassing into their sanctuary. All the Bechuana tribe have this ceremony. This region being far removed from any white people, the natives are much better behaved, and it was a pleasure to be amongst them. As a people they are quite alive to the ridiculous, and can understand a joke as well as any one. It was great fun to go out with the children and enter into games with them, which they so thoroughly enjoyed that when I arrived at their kraal again after many months, which I had frequently to do to pass through to other parts, my arrival was hailed with delight by the youngsters.

During my stay here I had a narrow escape from a lion. I was out with my rifle after some ostriches in the Kalahara, ten miles from Conge. Here and there were low bushes. I had run down one bird and fastened the feathers on the saddle before me. On my way home, on my right, about 300 yards, was what appeared to be a dead animal or an ostrich, I could not tell which, therefore I rode up and found it

was a blue wildebeest or gnu, nearly half eaten. Turning my horse to the left to resume my journey, walking the horse past a bush close on my right, about fifty yards from the carcass, I came right upon a full-grown lion and lioness lying down. My horse caught sight of them first, made a spring which nearly threw me from the saddle, so sudden and unexpected was his movement. When he did this I saw the lion about to spring; but our movement was too sudden, and he lost his opportunity; in another moment the lion would have been upon us. When a couple of hundred yards was between us, I turned the horse round to have a good look at the splendid animal, as I knew he would not follow. Both were standing looking at me. It was now getting late in the day, therefore I lost no more time in looking after birds or lions. We were not ten feet from the lion when the horse made his spring, about as lucky an escape from the jaws of a lion as one could desire.

Treking through the country where there were no roads to Kuis, on the Molapo, in Montsioa country, I came upon a small Bushman kraal, six huts in all, evidently a permanent station. A few goats were feeding near them, and in the bushes were four bush girls collecting most beautiful caterpillars of red, yellow, blue, and green, about three inches in length. They told my Hottentot they cook them in milk, and they are very nice. As the people seemed very friendly,

I remained the night with my waggon, and was much amused at the dancing and singing in the evening. Happy people! why should they be disturbed in their innocent life? There were old and young, in all eighteen; a quiet and inoffensive family. Far away from other kraals these people lived to themselves; not another family that I could see within fifty miles.

Walking round in the morning to collect some of these caterpillars to put into spirits, I observed many of the thorn-trees covered with dead insects, small lizards, frogs, beetles, grasshoppers, locusts, and many other kinds, all beautifully spiked on the long mimosa thorns; nearly every bough had one or more on. I knew at once that it was the larder of the little cruel butcher-bird. The bush seemed to swarm with them, and I have watched them frequently take and spike insects. One caught a frog and carried it to a tree close to where I was concealed, to see how he managed to pierce them so securely. The frog made a kind of scream when he was being taken up, and almost a scream when the large thorn was put through him. But he was not long suspended; when the bird was gone he wriggled himself clear, and fell to the ground, and I put him out of his pain. This butcher-bird is about the size, rather larger than a sparrow, black and white. One killed two canary-birds; both were put on the thorns. They seem never at rest, always look-

ing for game of some kind. They are known in every part of South Central Africa. The Wagt-een-beitje tree is their favourite for impaling their victims.

The mocking-bird is also common ; two kinds, one black and white, the other brown. The latter is the most talkative. Both night and day I have watched them on the topmost branches of the lofty trees, and their persistent and energetic mode of keeping up their everlasting talk has kept me awake many nights, as in several parts, where the wood is thick, they seem to occupy every tree and bush.<sup>1</sup>

Snakes are also plentiful down along the Molapo ; being out one afternoon with my gun after wild-ducks, walking along the banks, all of a sudden a large black mamba snake stood in my path, about ten feet distant ; he had raised himself more than two feet from the ground and was coming at me ; I had just time to fire into his head before he made his spring. He measured eleven feet seven inches. The poison-fangs are as long as a parrot's claws. I put him into one of these chimney-pot ant-hills to feed the ants ; several

<sup>1</sup> A curious instance of their imitative powers occurred. A Kaffir disappeared, and the next night groans were heard near the kraal. Search was made in vain to find him, and when the next night also groans were heard, it was evident they proceeded from his ghost. So a more diligent search was made, when the body was found buried and the murderer was hung. Still the groans continued, and at last they were found to proceed from a mocking-bird, sole witness of the murder.—ED.

more I saw the same day, and many puff-adders: the largest measured three feet five inches.<sup>2</sup>

All this part of the Chief Montsioa's territory, down past Kuis, and along the Maffeking river, which is his western division, is one of the driest portions of the Kalahara desert; in the winter months the only water to be obtained is in the sand of the river by digging; but in summer there is plenty. A road from Kuruman runs through the desert, down part of the way by the Kuruman river, crossing the Nosop and Oup to Meer, where the Bastards have formed a town: the distance is 240 miles. Before leaving this region I wish to explain the meteorological peculiarities of South Central Africa. When any great change in the atmosphere is about to take place, it has often been

<sup>2</sup> A pointer of mine was bitten by a mamba. About two hours afterwards I came along in the coach, and found her at an hotel (apparently dying), where she had been cruelly left by an officer to whom she had been lent. He had, however, had the grace to give her a dose of eau de-luce. I took her home, and gave her another with oil, and I rubbed it into the wound also, and an hour after another and then a fourth dose. The next day she was conscious, and the third able to walk, but only sideways, and on her tip-toes, being paralyzed. She was so for some days, and then a large abscess on the wound burst, and she recovered. It is said to be useless to apply the antidote externally, and that it only causes an abscess. The celebrated "Croft tincture" is composed chiefly of eau-de-luce. If you have no eau-de-luce, alcohol, administered in considerable doses, will often succeed, but dogs die with very large doses of it. They can take a good deal more when under the influence of poison than at other times.—ED.

remarked by travellers, that in Africa there is lightning and thunder without clouds. I have often remarked this phenomenon, and wondered what could be the cause. Isolated from all society, thrown upon our own resources for occupation and amusement, in these solitary journeys through this vast unknown region, we are more prone to investigate the mysteries of nature than we should if thrown more amongst the busy world. So it was in my case, and knowing there must be some natural law unknown to me, I took my observations accordingly to find it out.

During the long dry season many years ago, when travelling in the central portion of this desert, where this strange lightning and thunder occurred almost every night at certain seasons of the year, when no clouds are visible, all I could discover was, that the flashes seemed to come from one quarter. I was outspanned one day near one of those singular isolated granite hills, so often to be seen in the Kala-hara desert, that look more like a ruined temple than the works of nature. I started in the afternoon to climb to its summit, to take observations with my instruments, and found the elevation from base to top to be 278 feet. It would be difficult to find words to convey the exquisite pleasure I felt in standing alone on this lofty eminence, where no white man before ever placed his foot: alone, far from the busy world, its anxieties, and troubles; to look at the



A VIEW IN THE KALAHARA DESERT TAKEN IN 1864



fair scene beneath and around me, the rich vegetation on the plains (for it was in the month of November, when all is bright and fair), the distant mountains, their quaint outlines softened by space to lovely purple tints, as they fade away into the rosy sky on the horizon! Taking up a position under a huge block of granite, to be out of the sun's influence, for the thermometer registered 106° in the shade, to take observations, my attention was attracted to some heavy-looking clouds just perceptible above the topmost ridge of some lofty hills in the N.W. some twenty miles distant. The sun was shining on them, giving them a pink massive outline. I remained in this position until nearly sundown, when I returned to the waggons; no clouds were visible above the hills when I reached my camp, nothing but the bright glow of the sky, which later on had changed to a purplish-blue, and as night approached, came the usual lightning-flashes; my impression was we were going to have a storm, but there were no signs of clouds all night, and a clear sky the next day. On the following day we trekked fifteen miles more to the north, and in the afternoon observed, just above the horizon, a line of clouds, similar to those I had seen the day before in the same position, and as evening advanced they appeared to have dispersed, as they became blended with the evening tints, and a casual observer would declare, with every appearance of truth, that there

were no clouds to be seen in the sky, although he would see the lightning-flash only, as in no case when these apparently cloudless flashes come, is spark or electric fluid visible. I have been exploring constantly the whole of South Central Africa for twenty-five years, out in the open air nightly ; not an evening escaped my observations, therefore I write with some degree of confidence when I state no electric spark is ever seen with this lightning, in consequence of the distance, and partly below the horizon, and occasionally, but very seldom, in the stillness and quiet that pervades everything, the air perfectly calm, the distant rumble of thunder may be heard, and the clouds before morning have vanished. I followed these observations for months, and whenever any clouds were seen just above the horizon before the sun went down, they appeared to vanish as the evening tints deepened. The same result followed year after year.

I once took up my quarters at a small spring flowing from some granite rocks, where I remained six weeks, near the range of hills already described, to hunt and explore ; this was the following year, and strange to say, every afternoon heavy masses of clouds just showed their heads above the horizon, covering more than a quarter of a circle, that is, from the west of north to east-north-east, taking up the same position daily ; their lovely pink tints faded as evening ad-

vanced, no clouds could be seen, and yet nightly we had these flashes. Some may say, surely these clouds must have passed over some portion of the desert, not a great distance from my outspan, and rain have fallen from these storm-clouds; the reply is, for months prior to the rainy season commencing, clouds are formed after mid-day, and follow certain strata in the air, drawn by the electric condition of that portion of the earth's surface, and discharge the electricity they may contain without rain. I give this because I have on several occasions been stationary for some weeks in the line of country these clouds have taken, year after year, and at the same season. After the sun has passed the meridian, clouds have been collecting, generally from the N.E., and as evening advances, the vivid lightning and the heavy peals of thunder commence, and last for several hours, and then appear to evaporate, and a lovely starlight night succeeds; not a drop of rain has fallen during the storm, and a clear blue sky is seen over the whole of the horizon. In this part of the desert we are seldom below 3600 feet of sea-level, and, taking into consideration the clear and rarefied atmosphere, a flash of lightning and the thunder may be seen and heard at a greater distance than where the atmosphere is more dense. I may further observe, that owing to the rotundity of the earth, and the allowance to be made in every mile, it does not require that the clouds should be very far

away to be partly below the horizon. When we place our eye on a level with the ground and look along a flat country, at ten miles' distance a man must be seventy feet high for his head to be seen above the horizon; therefore, at twenty or thirty miles, a portion of the clouds would be beneath the horizon, not a great distance for sound to be heard on a still evening, or a flash of light to be seen as evening closed in. These storm-clouds, without rain, always precede the rainy season, as also the sand-storms, and those gigantic whirlwinds that may be seen passing over the desert by the dozen, and extending in some instances 1000 feet high, carrying up sand, sticks, and other articles that lie in their course; many of them measure 100 feet through. It is a strange sight to see many of these sand-columns passing along over a plain. I have observed, where the first passes, in the course of the day others follow exactly in the same line: they indicate a change in the weather. The mirage is also of daily occurrence. In travelling through the country, its general features appear to have entirely changed by imaginary lakes, looking so perfectly natural; lofty trees appear to be standing in water; long belts of bush and wood, which the traveller may be approaching, seem suspended in the air, showing their reflection in the vapoury atmosphere between them and the observer, which does not extend above a few feet from the ground: that apparently vanishes

as you proceed, but you are passing through it; isolated hills look like islands, by their base being surrounded by this moist air, which is not confined to any particular time of day, but towards the afternoon they are more frequent. If there is any wind, of course there is no mirage, as it disperses the damp air which causes it.

Montsioa territory is rich in cattle, which is sold to colonial traders. The natives also are cultivating their lands for corn, and a great sale in ploughs is the consequence. They are improving in every way, but for the last three years the Boers have laid waste the country, killing the people by hundreds, robbing them of their property, and stealing from them 30,000 head of cattle, besides sheep and goats, causing untold misery amongst a people who never injured them by word or deed. I write this from my own personal knowledge, being there at the time, and having only just returned to this country. The only means of preserving these people, and improving their condition, which is essential also to the prosperity and advancement of the Cape Colony, is to annex their lands.

## CHAPTER VIII.

The Chief Gaseitsive's territory of the Bangwaketse family of the Bechuanas.

THE next and third Bechuana chief from the Cape Colony is the Chief Gaseitsive, whose territory is more extensive than Montsioa's; his southern boundary joins on to the latter, along the entire length from east to west. His chief town is at Kanya, sixty-five miles north of Sehuba, Montsioa's town, situated on the summit of a lofty hill, the highest of any in this part of the country. The chief lives in a well-built house, furnished similar to any European residence. The hill where the main part of the town is built, slopes gradually down towards the north, on the east and west, more suddenly on the south by a cliff, 180 feet in height, composed of rounded and well water-worn stones, from the size of a marble to an ostrich-egg, forming a hard conglomerate, with dark-brown gritty sand, and it has every appearance of having once been a shore-line, and the back of an ancient harbour. At the bottom of this cliff the lower town is built, and is the mission-station and

church of the London Missionary Society, under the Rev. Mr. Good. This lower town stands at the upper end of an extensive level opening, surrounded on three sides by hills, open to the south, where a small sluicet drains the land upon which the lower town stands. The principal road from the colony after passing through Montsioa's territory at Maceby's station, runs due north to Kanya; the distance from the former is sixty miles, from Molapo river; half-way, at Vaalpan Pits, is the division between Montsioa and Gaseitsive. The country is thickly wooded and very pretty; all to the west of this road is part of the Kalahara Desert belonging to these two chiefs. A road from Molemo's station on the Molapo joins this, and at Vaalpan Pits a road branches off to the left, through the desert, to Lake N'game, a distance of 420 miles to the Chief Molemo at Leshubatabe's Station, east of that lake.

The principal watering-places along this road are Moshanen Kraal, thirty miles; Seletse, forty miles; Tans, twenty miles; Kaikai, 110, with small pits between; Makapolo Pans, 108, also small pans along the road; Goose Vlei, sixty-four miles beyond, and to Molemo's station, near the lake, forty-eight. The country through which this road passes varies in character and scenery; the lower portion passes between isolated and picturesque hills, well wooded to their summits with a variety of subtropical vegetation.

Mokotontuane Hills are particularly noticeable for their beautiful flora. The plains and valleys have many Kaffir stations with their petty chiefs, under paramount Chief Gaseitsive, who belongs to the Bang-waketse tribe of the Bechuana family. They are Moshanen, Montsioa's old station; Selatse, Gabatane, Ses, Khokhochu, Lutlue, Tans, and several others, as also Bushman kraals where large herds of cattle are kept.

The people are quiet and inoffensive, living the same kind of life their forefathers lived, thousands of years before. The men have their skin mantle, the women also, with their short kilt, beads of ostrich-eggs, also brass wire from Kanya, for feathers, karoses, skins, and other native produce.

The climate is almost perfect, no frosts in winter, which is the dry season, as rain rarely falls between April and October. Lions, wolves, leopards, and a host of the cat tribe, some of which are beautifully marked and make handsome karoses, which fetch a good price, are numerous over the whole of this part.

The main transport-road, already described, from Maceby station on the Molapo, in Montsioa's territory, to Kanya, is the only road now open from the Cape Colony to the interior, for carrying on the colonial trade with the native tribes beyond, as now settled by the late Transvaal Convention. All the

others passing northwards go through that Republic and are subject to a heavy tax, consequently they are closed to us. Previous to the Transvaal rebellion, we had six different roads for conveying merchandise from our two colonies, Natal and Cape Colony, free from taxation. The interior trade from Natal is entirely closed against English traders, in consequence of the distance being too great to go round to the only one now left to us. The other main roads to Kanya, besides the one already described, pass through the Transvaal and Zeerust, which has been given to the Boer Government, since Keats' award has been so unwisely abandoned and their north-west border extended, the result of ignorance on the part of the British Government as to the importance of keeping in our own hands so valuable a part of Montsioa's territory, for the purpose of greater freedom of communication with that vast native region beyond. The transport over them would have been much easier and cheaper, in consequence of good roads and an unlimited supply of water. The only road we have willingly confined ourselves to, from Maceby's to Kanya, has only one permanent water, at Vaal-pan-pits, for sixty miles with a heavy road, which for heavy transport-waggons is a loss to the trader. The roads which the colonial trade passed over, now closed to us by the extension of the Transvaal boundary beyond Keats' award, which was the one that should have been

maintained, are as follows : From Kimberly to Taungs, Melema on the Molapo to Rinokano, and the river road along the Limpopo or from Rinokano to Kanya by two routes ; another is *via* Mamosa ; a fourth passing along the open plains by the two salt-pans, and the other two, one to the north of Bloemhof, and from that town by the Vaal river roads—all concentrating on Molapo and Molmane, then through the new land given to the Transvaal by the Convention. This is the position in which the British Government has placed the two colonies with regard to the interior trade.

The country through which these roads pass to Kanya is very lovely, and superior to any part of the colony. One of these passes through a drift of the Molmane river, a branch of the Klein Marico, passing on past John Mentji's farm ; a small lake in front of the house, surrounded with beautiful trees, and a pretty fountain at the back, with rising ground in the distance, is a spot to be remembered. Beyond is the fountain at Ludic's, passing between hills clothed in every variety of foliage, on the Kanya ; the distance is eighty miles. The other principal transport-road to Kanya from Rinokano, passes through a more lovely country than the one just described, the rich alluvial soil of the valleys, well-watered by fine springs, which are small branches of the Notuane river, fine grass-lands studded with beautiful groups of trees and bush.

On every side of the road, well-wooded, lofty, and picturesque hills—they may be termed mountains; others in the distance rearing their lofty heads, visible between the openings of those near. The subtropical plants, scarlet creepers climbing up and between the isolated rocks, piled one upon another, complete a landscape seldom to be surpassed for the beauty of its scenery.

The distance to Kanya is fifty-four miles, ten miles from Rinokano, which is a large Kaffir station. When I first paid it a visit, an old Chief Moelo lived there. It is a mission-station of the German Mission Society, in charge of the Rev. Mr. Jansen, who is noted for his hospitality to travellers; he has a beautiful garden well stocked with fruit, also orange and lemon-trees. Monata, ten miles north of Rinokano, is the old station of the Chief Marshelale, who, owing to the continual inroads of the Boers from the Transvaal stealing his cattle, removed to the other side of the mountains beyond Kanya, where Pelan lived. This old station has now been occupied by several Bastard families, who have built quite a town of good brick houses, situated on a branch of the Notuane river, which runs through a pass in the mountain of great beauty. Above the poort near the springs are many Karunnas; some spoke very good English, and gave me much information respecting the locality. Six miles beyond, the road takes a short turn to

the left, passing between high hills for one mile, the road being very steep and stony, and a mile beyond you arrive at that singular and isolated hill called Moselekatze Kop, a lofty conical hill ; the height from its base to summit is 275 feet, by my aneroid barometer. This is composed of hard sandstone and shale ; great quantities of ironstone, and conglomerate in large boulders, cover the ground at the base, which appears to have fallen from the top ; the rocks round about are blue and white metamorphic.

As my intention was to scale it the next day, I outspanned under some fine trees close to the hill for the night, that I might be on the topmost point at sunrise, which at that season of the year (April) is about five o'clock ; and as the sun rose above the cloudless horizon, with the pure clear atmosphere, it threw out all the distant mountain-peaks in bold and well-defined outlines, although some of them were more than sixty miles distant, and as the sun rose, casting the deep shadows of the surrounding hills, and bringing out the rich green foliage of the trees and shrubs, it was a sight seldom to be seen. There are many cattle and vieh posts for sheep and goats in these valleys, that belong to the people at Kanya, and other kraals, in the country belonging to the Chief Gaseitsive.

Leaving Moselekatze Kop, going to Kanya, the road turns west, then north-west for thirteen miles, to a

deep and stony watercourse, that comes down from the mountain two miles distant, which is a branch of the river Tans and Sand, into the Notuane. Many picturesque sandstone hills of every variety of form, covered with rich subtropical vegetation to their summits, with gigantic rocks peeping out between the bushes, give a peculiar feature to the landscape. Some of the finest tree-aloes grow here to perfection, the stems measuring twenty-five feet, and in girth six feet, their long light-green pointed leaves measuring four feet, and when in bloom their many crimson flowers are beautiful objects. The country being so lovely, I remained at this stony river three days to sketch and prospect, and was rewarded by finding in the bed of the river, mixed up in the large stones, many ancient flint implements, that had been washed down in heavy rains. Some of them were so jambed in between large boulders of several ton weight, that I had to get a crowbar to remove them. Some of these boulders measured over four feet in diameter, showing the force of the stream and quantity of water that falls in these thunderstorms.

The temperature at night in my waggon in April was 68°, and at mid-day 84°. No large game has been seen, although the natives tell me there are koodoos, blue wildebeeste or gnu, hartebeeste and springbok.

From this river the road winds through these

beautiful valleys, passing a remarkable granite rock standing alone in the veldt, round like a Kaffir hut, twenty feet in height, continuing on through the same kind of country to Kanya. Another, in fact two other roads, leave Rinokano, and go direct to Molapololo, the Chief Sechele's station, one round by Ramoocha Khotla, named after an old chief, passing through Base Poort, a lovely spot, plenty of baboons and beautiful birds; we cross the Sand river four times, very stony, on to Sneyman's farms, past the Spitz Kop, another remarkable hill, over an open flat, park-like, with beautiful clumps of trees, to Dwasberg, passing on the right Kolobekatze mountain, leaving on the left the Quagga and Kopani hills, and on to Ramoocha, where the Chief Makose has a large station. These people belong to the Bamankitse tribe of the Bechuana family. It is a mission in charge of the Rev. Mr. Schönenburg, of the Berlin Society. From this kraal the road divides, one going to Chene Chene, where the Chief Maklapan lives on the bank of the Notuana, and then to Motsode, taking the Limpopo river road to Ba-manguato. The second goes direct to Molapololo; the third to the same town, through the Kaffir station Monope, under the Chief Kuanette, of the Bahurutsi-Bamangane of the Bakatla tribe of the Bechuana family. Monope is also a Berlin Mission station, in charge of the Rev. Mr. Tanson.

The large Kaffir station of Monope is well situated on elevated ground, a gentle rise from the river Coloben, a branch of the Notuane, being protected by several large stone koptjies. The people are very quiet and civil, cultivate extensively Kaffir corn, and make karoses, which they sell to traders. When I first knew the people, twenty years ago, there was not a man or woman that dressed in European clothes; at the present time most of them are getting into the way of dressing. The men wear clothes, and will have the best.

The Natuane river has many tributaries, that take their rise in this territory and at Rinokano, which drains the whole of this district, and falls into the Limpopo. The town of Kanya, as I have stated, stands on a hill, much higher by several hundred feet than the surrounding country. There are seven stores kept by colonial traders, who did, before the Transvaal rebellion, a good trade with the natives in corn, cattle, feathers, ivory, skins, karoses, and other native produce, but which have been almost destroyed through the Boer disturbances. The Chief Gaseitsive is a quiet and peaceful man, and his son Bathoen is also well disposed. All the men dress in European clothes, and the women are taking to them. It is one of the most difficult things to change the habits and customs of a people, but in my time great strides have been made in this direction up even to the Zambese. The

large station at Mashonen, eighteen miles to the west of Kanya, is now occupied by this chief's people, since Montsioa left to live on his own ground at Sehuba. The country between Kanya and Masepa station is very picturesque, lovely valleys, some well cultivated; many of the hills that surround them are clothed in lovely vegetation—the euphorbia, wild fig, and other sub-tropical plants; creepers of every variety climbing up between the large masses of sandstone rocks that stand out in grotesque forms, piled one upon another, add much to the beauty of the landscape. Such charming scenery could not be passed over in haste, particularly when surveying the country, which detained me from time to time many weeks in trekking through.

The different streams that drain this part rise to the west in the Kalahara desert and fall into the Sand, Tuns, and Coloben branches of the Motuane river. The climate is splendid, so far as perpetual sunshine for eight months of the year goes; the summer from December to April being the rainy season, when severe thunderstorms and a downpour of rain are almost of daily occurrence; but with such a long drought vegetation does not seem to suffer.

The natives are most friendly, bringing milk, green mealies, sugar-cane, pumpkins, anything they possess, to the waggon, in exchange for beads, tobacco, or such trifles as they might require.

At one of my outspans, close to the highest range of hills between Masepa and Coloben, I formed my camp under some fine trees, as it was my intention to ascend the highest hill, to take observations with my servant, the next day. During the night several wolves visited us; the smell of the fresh meat in the waggons brought them nearer than was prudent, for we shot two very large ones in the early part of the night. Their skins are very useful for many purposes. This occurred when few white men visited Africa; consequently, lions, wolves, and other animals were seen and heard daily, and therefore necessary precautions had to be taken to guard against any attack upon my oxen. In the early morning of the following day I saddled up my horse, and with my rifle started for the hills. It is always a practice in such a country never to be without your rifle, for it is impossible to say when you may require to make use of it. Finding the hill much too steep to ride up, I led the horse along a winding path between bushes and trees, and reached the top, which was level and open. The view from this point repaid me for the trouble of ascending. The lofty and well-wooded hills in the immediate vicinity, the distant mountains with their rugged outlines, clothed in purple mist, with the rich valleys beneath, was a landscape worth looking at. The clear atmosphere brought out all the inequalities and projecting rocks of quaint forms into prominence. I was

not, however, allowed to remain long in this peaceful solitude before I became aware I had invaded Mr. Baboon's stronghold and look-out station. Making a more minute survey of my surroundings, I observed that many of the trees and bushes concealed one or more of these monkeys, and others perched upon rocks not far off intently watching my movements. Not a sound escaped them; I believe the presence of my horse had much to do with keeping them quiet, for horses then were never seen in those parts. If I had been alone some of the old ones might have given me trouble; many of them appeared to be nearly my own size. To see what effect a shot would have, I fired one chamber of my revolver. Then the music commenced—barks, screams, half-human grunts sounded from a hundred different places as they scrambled from branch to branch to gain cover amongst the rocks and small caves in the side of the hill, which, in days long since passed away, were occupied by Bushmen. The height of this elevation was 4560 feet above sea-level. On arriving at my waggon I found one of my oxen stuck in a mud-hole, and with difficulty released him and proceeded on to Masepa, the petty chief Pelan's station, where the Kaffir women brought me thick milk, which is very good and acceptable in this hot weather. There are many Kaffir stations along these roads of the Bakwana and Bangweketse tribe of Bechuana, who live under

their respective chiefs. From my earliest visits in this country, up to the present time, the Boers have been a murdering, and unprincipled people, over all these parts, stealing the native cattle and encroaching on the land. In 1852 Dr. Livingstone, in a letter to Sir John Pakington, states,—“Frequent attempts were made by the Transvaal Boers to induce the Chief Sechele to prevent the English from passing him in their way north ; and, because he refused to comply with this policy, a commando was sent against him by Mr. Pretorius, which, on the 30th September last, attacked and destroyed his town, killing sixty of his people, and carried off upwards of 200 women and children. I can declare most positively that, except in the matter of refusing to throw obstacles in the way of English traders, Sechele never offended the Boers by either word or deed. They wished to divert the trade into their own hands. They also plundered my house of property which would cost in England at least 335*l.* They smashed all the bottles containing medicine, and tore all the books of my library, scattering the leaves to the winds ; and besides my personal property, they carried off or destroyed a large amount of property belonging to English gentlemen and traders. Of the women and children captured, many of the former will escape, but the latter are reduced to hopeless slavery. They are sold and bought as slaves ; and I have myself seen and conversed with such taken

from other tribes, and living as slaves in the houses of the Boers. One of Sechele's children is amongst the number captured, and the Boer who owns him can, if necessary, be pointed out." The above statement is perfectly true in every particular. This murderous attack on Sechele and his people took place at Monope, and the old men at the station took me up into one of the stone hills close to the town, and showed me the small cave, about ten feet square, in the side of the hill, where Sechele and his wife took refuge with several guns and ammunition, and were pursued by the Boers, who kept up a constant fire into the cave, whilst Sechele and his wife, protected by the projecting rock, kept them off, Sechele firing, whilst his wife loaded the pieces. And the Kaffirs called my attention to the bullet-marks on the opposite rocks, where portions of the bullets still remained. Finding that Sechele shot a Boer whenever he showed himself, killing five, they withdrew, and Sechele and his wife came out. After this affair Sechele went a few miles north with his people, and settled at Coloben, and then on to his present station, Molapololo. There is no denying the fact that the Boers, from the time they crossed the Vaal river into Transvaal, have been a greater curse to the country, wherever they have set foot, than Moselekatzé ever was when he marched north from Zululand. Some think they are excellent pioneers in a new country. They advance into native territories,

killing the people by thousands, enslaving women and children, robbing them of all their lands and cattle, and occupying their country, with no ulterior benefit to themselves or others, but merely as a field for further cruelties and spoliation of native races, so that the country may be cleared of them, but not for civilization or improving the country, because they leave a dark spot wherever they settle from the ruthless cruelties they perpetrate upon unoffending and innocent people. Are they then good pioneers? All the sophistry in the world cannot make it right. To murder, enslave, and rob innocent human beings, living on their own lands, who have done no harm, and have as much right to live and enjoy their own as any other people, black or white, that they should be so ruthlessly treated by men who profess Christianity and to be a God-fearing people, is an anomaly, and cannot be tolerated by a just and upright people like the British nation. And yet these atrocities are at the present moment being carried on in Bechuanaland by the Boers of the Transvaal and Orange Free State and other scum of European nationality, who have lost all sense of honour and justice, for the purpose of gaining a footing in the country; and we allow them to commit these lawless and criminal acts unchecked. They do not even civilize or improve the country they take. Look at the Transvaal; for forty years the Boers have had possession of it. What is

it now? No more civilized than when they entered it, but the contrary. The Boers are more demoralized, as we know, who know them. Their acts alone are a sufficient answer to this question, and South Africa will not advance in prosperity and wealth until the Boer element is brought to a sense of justice; and that will never be while the Boers hold an independent position in the Transvaal.

The population of the Bechuanas in Gaseitsive's territory, including those under the Chief Kuanette at Monope and Pelan at Masepa, does not exceed 35,000, exclusive of Bushmen; and against this the entire white population of the Transvaal at the present time does not exceed 40,000, including English and other nationalities. Then why should this handful of men be allowed to keep all South Africa in a perpetual state of disquietude, to the immense injury of the trade of the country? The gold re-discoveries, however, will settle this question, and that within the next year or two. The bulk of the most intelligent and influential Boers are determined to be annexed, and the hoisting of the British flag is only delayed by the savage, ignorant "Doppers," with whom the diggers will make short work whenever they think fit to do so. The population now cannot be less than 50,000, of whom 20,000 are Europeans, and ALL fighting-men, whilst the Boers cannot muster more than 10,000, of whom the half are on our side.

## CHAPTER IX.

The Chief Sechele of the Bakwana tribe of the Bechuana family.

ON entering this chief's territory from the south, that is from Kanya and Masepa, the country is undulating and densely wooded with trees and bush, the road stony and uneven. Approaching Molapololo, Sechele's chief town, a long range of lofty hills comes in view, and as you near them a bold outline presenting many perpendicular and lofty cliffs, which gain in magnitude as you advance along the road with your waggon, passing between many Kaffir gardens. This range reminded me very forcibly of the Devonshire coastline at Bolthead, and requires a short description to make more clear the general outline, as in no other region I have visited is there so singular a mountain, and one that conveys so plainly to the mind the history of remote times, and which appears so little changed from what it was at that period.

On leaving the low and level country to enter Molapololo, the entrance is in a break of these hills, which rise from their base several hundred feet. In this opening is the remains of a considerable river. On

passing through this entrance, which is about 250 yards wide, we come into an open space, surrounded by lofty hills, with an opening on the west side where this ancient river enters from the Kalahara desert, passing through this open space and through the entrance just described. On the east side of this open space is another entrance, flanked with lofty and almost perpendicular cliffs. The open space itself is about half a mile both ways, of an irregular shape, and has every appearance of being at one time a splendid harbour, with two entrances, surrounded by lofty hills, leaving the opening on the west side, where the once ancient river passed in between a narrow opening of light sandstone rocks. The soil of this open space is clear light sand, and is now occupied by several hundred native huts, and is also the residence of the missionary, the Rev. Mr. Price, of the London Missionary Society, and also traders who have several stores. The outer face of the range of hills above named that faces the south, present a bold and perpendicular front of several hundred feet in height, half-way down; then it slopes at an angle of fifty-five to the foot, which is the accumulation of soil fallen from the upper cliffs; at the base a level sandy space of several hundred feet, clear of bush, similar to our sea-coast sands; and beyond for thirty miles the country is almost level, but thickly wooded. The principal formation of these hills is sandstone, the stratifi-

cation is almost horizontal, but dips towards the north. The entrance on the eastern side is most interesting, and showing the action of the sea on the outer face of the lofty cliffs, which were exposed to its force. Half-way up one of the faces, 400 feet above the base, is a large cave extending some distance into the hill; the entrance is shaped like the portal of a castle, with perpendicular sides fifty feet wide and seventy feet in height, the rock round and smooth on both sides of the entrance. The interior has several chambers, similar in form to many caverns along the rocky shores in various parts of the world formed by the action of the waves. The land-face of this ancient harbour, the hill, rises 400 feet at an angle of 30°. On the summit is another extensive level space, surrounded on the west and east by lofty rocks; the north is open to the level country beyond. On this open ground the main portion of the town of Molapololo is situated, and the residence of the Chief Sechele, who has two well-built houses furnished after European fashion: an entrance-hall, fitted up with weapons of war, a dining and drawing-room, bedrooms and offices, sideboards, tables, chairs, with the usual glasses, decanters, silver stands, and such things as are required in a dining-room. The drawing-room has sofas and lounging chairs, pictures, and everything nice—quite as comfortable as any house I have ever been in in South Africa, except in the principal towns in the

colony. Sechele dresses well in English clothes, and his eldest son. Sebele, is also a well-dressed, handsome Kaffir. In 1867, when I first saw Sechele, he was not so particular in his dress, and most of his people had skin clothes; now nearly all wear English clothes of the best quality. There are many trading stores in the upper and lower town, and a great trade is being carried on with the natives. I am describing now the state of the natives in 1880, my last visit. But now since the Transvaal has been handed back to the Boers, trade has become paralyzed and little or nothing is doing with the colony, as the Transvaal Boers have closed all the interior roads, and not only done so, but robbed and burnt traders' waggons on their way to the interior, and driven the traders out of Montsioa's and Monkoroan's territories, and by their lawless acts have devastated the country.

At my last visit but one, in 1877, I was received with great kindness, and as an old friend, by Sechele, who had on former occasions shown me great kindness and hospitality. I arrived at the town on Sunday afternoon, the 1st of September, after suffering much from want of water, and bad grass, since leaving Masepa. I called on the Rev. Mr. J. Moffat, and then returned to my waggon, where I found Sechele's brother, who had been sent by his chief, inviting me up to see him. On Monday morning I walked up to his house; he was sitting in his kotla with his

councillors, then stood up, shook hands, took my arm without speaking, and walked to his house, a few steps from the kotla, as the enclosure is called where he and his councillors transact business, and took me into his drawing-room, seated me beside him on the sofa, still holding my hand, and ordered coffee. After giving him the particulars of my journey and the news of the country, he asked me to take dinner with him, and was pleased to see me. The table was laid similar to any white man's—stewed beef and pumpkins, Kaffir beer, for which he is famous. Then I had to listen to all his troubles respecting the Chief Linsey, who lives at Kgaman'yane or Motsoe, a station forty-two miles on the east of Molapololo, who had robbed him of all his cattle, and he was now a poor man. Having examined some papers he placed in my hands, I gave him an outline of my journey to the Matabele-land, and left him with a promise to see him on my return from up-country, to give the news. Such is the chief the British people look upon as a savage, and many out here call a wily old fox, because he is guarded in what he says and does ; and can any one be surprised at his reticence when he has so many enemies in the Boers, who are watching for the first chance to make war on him and his people in their thirst for land and plunder ? He has always been a good friend to the English, and recent events have taught him to be more than careful how he acts, seeing

that no dependence can be placed on the English Government in relation to South African affairs ; and such is the feeling of all the great chiefs from the Zambese down to the Cape Colony.

A more romantic position for a native town could not well be chosen, and with little labour this natural fortress could be made impregnable. Many of the women wear petticoats, others still retain their skin dresses with bead and brass ornaments ; and if left alone, without fear of Boer invasion, these are the most happy people in the world. The English people have hitherto been looked upon as friends and protectors, and as one of them I felt proud of my country. But since the Transvaal rebellion and its retrocession, an Englishman is ashamed to travel the country, to be subject to the taunts of the chiefs and people at the boasted honour of England. As I have stated, the people are the most happy of the human race—having no cares, no great division of classes, no extravagant fashions or forms to keep up. Luxuries of civilized life are unknown. They have their amusements, their nightly music and dances, the usual reed band already described ; the women and children sing, and keep excellent time to the music ; their clear and musical voices are pleasant to hear. The duty of the men is to attend to the oxen and cows, make karoses and clothes, hunt and work with their waggon and spans, fetching in the corn when ripe, bringing in

wood for the fires ; the boys look after the calves and goats. The women cook, bring water, hoe the gardens, and keep the birds away, and cut the corn when ripe—the labour being so divided, all goes on pleasantly. Sechele assists the missionary in his services at the church, which is a large building in the upper town. A few days previous to my visit a troop of young elephants marched up to the town from the Kalahara desert, having lost themselves—a very unusual occurrence, as they seldom come down so far south. The natives turned out and shot them, causing great excitement.

In Sechele's territory there are no other stations of any size ; he has many smaller kraals in outlying districts, and several cattle-posts belonging to Kaffirs, some of whom are rich in stock. Four roads branch from Molapololo to the north, one passing through the desert to Lake N'game, two direct to Bamangwato through the Bush Veldt, a fourth *via* Motsoe, by continuing down the Notuane river ; another, making a fifth, taking the river road by the Limpopo. The distance by the direct roads to Mongwato is 133 miles. In the dry season most of the transport-waggons take the river road, as water is always to be obtained. In the direct roads, many of the pans dry up ; only at Selene Pan can water be obtained, which is eighty-eight miles from Sechele's, and forty-five from Mongwato. All that part of the country is very pretty ;

there are no hills, small kopties are numerous. The trees and bush that grow in such park-like clumps, of great variety, add to its charm. The first year I travelled that road, eighteen years ago, the whole country swarmed with game, lions, and wolves, that is, at the time I speak of. The koodoo, with fine spiral horns from three to four feet in length, is a noble animal, the size of an ordinary ox, of a dun colour; their fine action when trotting or on the gallop, carrying their heads well up, is a fine sight. Harte-beests, roibok, with their beautiful fat sides and sleek coats. Well marked with black stripes and white is the zebra, and when a troop of a hundred or more pass, it is a picture in itself. The ostrich was then plentiful, but it was difficult to run them down where the trees grow so thick, with bush between.

I had a young and fleet horse who got quite used to hunting them; if he saw any, it was difficult to keep him in hand, and in a country of thick bush, wolf-holes, and antbears, it required great caution to prevent a tumble of both horse and man. The best plan I found was to stalk them between the bushes. I had a narrow escape with a lion on one of my ostrich hunts. When chasing them at full speed, I had to leap a low bush, no other opening being near; when half-way over, I saw a lion on the other side close under the branches, who raised himself as if he had

been asleep—I partly passed over him. All I had time to see was his great head and mane as he jumped up, but I was off and away before he seemed to realize his position; at any rate he did not give chase, as I thought he might do. I think my horse had some inkling of the same, for he stretched out at his full speed. At night they became very troublesome, prowling round the waggon, keeping us awake to prevent them coming disagreeably close to the oxen and two horses fastened securely by reins to the trektow and waggon. Not being hunted, they were very bold. One night they killed a beautiful gemsbok within 100 yards of the waggon; the long straight horns I secured the next morning.

Several Bushmen and their families kept with me during my stay in these parts, and were of great assistance in fetching water, cutting up the flesh to make biltong by drying it in the sun, and bringing in the game when shot. Some of the Bushmen and women were well made, the old ones poor specimens of humanity. One girl was a perfect model, with rounded, well-formed limbs, and in good condition from living on the game the men killed with their bows and arrows. These people were quite black and small, a different type altogether from the Bushmen of the south. They were of the same family as those who occupy a great portion of the Kalahara desert, of which this forms the eastern part. Their language is also different;

they are called Masara Bushmen from their small size; that word signifies woman. They were perfectly naked, the weather never being cold, at this time the thermometer being 102° in the shade. Their long rough grass huts being a broken bough or a few sticks stuck up and long grass thrown over.

They have a very ingenious method of taking game by pitfalls. They dig four or five pits eight feet deep, ten long and four wide, fifty or sixty and sometimes 100 feet from each other, not in a straight line, but so placed that when they make a fence from one to the other it would form the letter V; at the point would be the pit, and no hedge, so that an animal wanting to pass through would walk down to the opening, and as the pit would be beautifully covered over with small sticks and grass, made a very inviting road to walk over. It was at one of these openings I had a very narrow escape of my life. Returning to my camp after a long day out after game, I came upon this fence, seeming an opening, and not having seen any before, I was going through, my dog in front, when I saw him disappear all at once, howling as dogs will howl when hurt or frightened. Dismounting. I pulled away some of the sticks to make the hole larger, and found one of these pits, with a large sharp-pointed pole stuck upright in the centre, and there was the dog at the bottom in a great state of mind, but how to get him out was a puzzle; as there were several

long straight branches that formed the hedge, I got sufficient to put in that I might go down to take hold of the dog's neck and lift him out, which took me an hour to perform. I took care to give these hedges a wide berth when I saw any afterwards. If a giraffe or elephant fell in he would be impaled and unable to move. Smaller game like my dog are caught alive. If I and my horse had gone in, he would have been impaled, and I should have been probably killed.

The Bechuanas have another method of catching game by pitfalls—at least many years ago it was in use, where instead of securing one, they trapped hundreds at one time. In those extensive open plains where tens of thousands of the antelope species roam, a favourable spot would be selected, and from eight to twelve large pits dug, ranged in a row fifteen feet apart, the earth taken out to the depth of five feet, and thrown up between them, forming a steep bank, at the bottom of this pit, it would be divided into smaller pits, two feet in depth, leaving a wall of earth between each; these would be square, and three in a row. The full size of the opening would be about thirty by twelve feet, placed longways. These would occupy a considerable space; at the extreme ends a thick bush hedge would prevent the game leaping over, and several hundred men placed in addition to prevent the animals going

round. When all was prepared, men would drive the game by thousands towards the pits, and as they were pressed on by those behind they made for the pits to escape, where they would fall in, and having no foothold in the small square pits above named, had to remain. Hundreds passing over them, also got fixed, until the pits were full.

Then the grand slaughter commenced ; as many as 1200 have been caught at one time. All the men, women, and children set to work ; fires made, cooking begins, the skins taken off, and the meat cut into lengths and hung up to dry in the sun for future use ; not a marrow-bone is wasted, and it takes days to complete the work. This practice has been given over for years, but the pits still remain, some very perfect, which I measured. The Dutch name is “fung-cut,” the Kaffir name “hopo.” The game driven into these pits would be composed of all kinds common to the country. The Bechuanas have guns and shoot the game, and have become very good shots.

At Molapololo when the people get short of meat, a hunt is got up to go out for weeks to shoot game. Thirty or forty men, each with a gun, and many pack-oxen, with several waggons, proceed to the Kalahara, where game is always to be had, and when they have procured enough meat or biltong to load up the oxen, they return home. Many women and children go in the waggons with them ; it is a grand picnic. I was with

them on one occasion when we had a lion-hunt, and we killed three out of seven, but four of the Bechuanas got fearfully wounded.

I was outspanned about 100 miles on the north-west of Sechle's, near a very pretty pan full of water, it being the rainy season in February, when one of these hunts came along, and outspanned a short distance from my waggon. The night previous we had been on the watch, as lions kept prowling about the waggons, but could not see any, the night being very dark. The next night the Kaffirs lost one of their largest pack-oxen, and as we saw by the spoor, that there were several, the Kaffirs came to me, they knowing me very well, and asked if I would go with them and hunt up the lions, as we had several good dogs to drive them out of the bush. We mustered in all twenty-two guns—myself and my driver, a Hottentot, a capital shot, and twenty of the hunting party. Leaving the camp about 2 p.m., we took the lions' spoor for nearly a mile into a small koppie with thick bush. The best part of the sport was to see the Kaffirs in their excitement, as if they had never seen a lion before; my fear was they might shoot me in their anxiety to have a shot and be the first to kill; every man had his place assigned him, but we could not draw the lions out of their cover; the dogs made a great noise, but would not go in. Finding they would not move, I placed three Kaffirs in

a good position for them to keep firing with their rifles into the most likely part ; this after a time brought four lions out, three others slunk away to the rear. Two had evidently been hit by the bullets, for they made for the nearest Kaffirs, whom they seized. Three were killed, having received seven to eight shots each ; those that made their escape were young, only half grown. This was a glorious day for the Kaffirs, to go home and tell their chief and friends of their bravery.

All this part of the Kalahara belongs to, and is in Gaseitsive's territory, a country nearly 200 miles square ; the northern part from Molapololo is a complete forest, fine trees, bush and open glades, and is his hunting-ground, where his people procure ostrich feathers, skins, and game, and also ivory. It was, when I first knew it, full of game, but since the natives have obtained rifles, they have greatly reduced it. The Notuane river and its branches drain the country belonging to Sechele and Gaseitsive, and is a tributary of the Limpopo. Fifty miles to the east of Molapololo is a large Kaffir station, Chene Chene, within the latter territory, under the Chief Maklapan. A beautiful and picturesque hill stands close to it, which is visible at a great distance. The whole country is forest and full of game. The town is twenty-nine miles south from Motsodie. The river road to the interior from Molapololo passes through a very pretty

and interesting part of the country, a long range of low thickly wooded hills on the left. Twenty-two miles on the road from Molapololo is Clokan, a small stream, another branch of the Notuane, where water seldom fails.

On my last journey I found a trader, a Mr. Okenshow, outspanned, who told me several lions had killed three blue wildebeeste the previous night, and advised me not to let my oxen go out of my sight in the thick bush. This spot is famed for beautiful birds. After shooting some pheasants and four of these little beauties, I went on and passed another small stream called Koopong, thirteen miles, and then to Motsodie, the large Kaffir station under the Chief Linsey, which is forty-two miles distant from Mopapololo; he cautioned me to look after my horses and oxen, for the country was full of lions, and they were so bold they came close up to the town. They follow the game, more particularly quaggas or zebras, and, as there were plenty of them, also koodoos, hartebeeste, and wildebeeste.

Previous to my first visit, a chief named Kgaman-gane left his country on the east side of the Limpopo river, crossed over and settled at this station, with all his people, by permission of Sechele, and built a large station up among several hills, that it might be well protected in case of war with any tribe. At his death, his son Linsey ruled jointly with his uncle, and

claimed the country as his own, and began stealing Sechele's cattle and killing his herds ; this led to war between them, several attacks were made by the latter on the town, but they were driven off, with a few killed, and so the war for a time was ended. This was the trouble Sechele told me of. The town is well selected for defence, the hills command every approach to it. Linsey lives in a brick house, and he and his people dress in European clothes. There is a mission-station under the London Missionary Society. The people are very civil and ready to help strangers. Close up to the town are some very large ant-hills, fifteen feet in height, and forty feet in circumference at the base, terminating in a sharp point. They are the work of the small white ant that is so destructive to furniture and buildings ; what motive they have for building them so lofty and pointed, I have never been able to discover, because all their food supply is conveyed into it through little holes at the base. They are wonderful works for so small an insect. I remained here a week that I might explore the country, which is of sandstone formation, granite below, iron conglomerate in large boulders on the slopes of the hills.

There are two roads to the Limpopo river, one on each side of the Notuane, and another through the Bush Veldt, to the Great Marico river, with branch roads to Chene Chene, Ramoocha, and Rinokano

stations, the two former ones being very bad and crossing many sluits. I took the one through the Bush Veldt. Leaving Motsodie in the afternoon, I crossed the river, and as night would be dark, outspanned early, to be prepared for any nocturnal visits from our feline friends. Fixing upon a pretty little open space, the only one I could find along the road, as it was one dense bush on both sides, I outspanned, and made everything ready, collecting plenty of wood to make big fires. Having made a fire to cook our evening meal, my three Kaffirs, or rather my Hottentot driver and two Kaffirs, were sitting smoking over it, and having seen all secure, were ready to turn into bed, when my driver, a first-class boy, called out there were lions coming on. He was the first to hear them—their noise is not to be mistaken when once heard. Having listened some time, the sounds, which on a still night can be heard a long distance off, appeared to be approaching. Our first care was to replenish the fire and pile up wood for two more, bring the foremost oxen close up to the waggon, making them fast to the wheels; the horse was placed between the waggon and fire, fastened to the front wheels, and more wood collected. During this time the lions appeared to be nearing us. After lighting the other two fires, I gave the boys a rifle each; myself and driver took up our position on the front waggon-box, that we might have a better view. The night

being very still,' not a sound was heard, except occasionally from our friends, as they evidently were very near. When about one o'clock in the morning the sounds ceased altogether ; then we knew they had discovered us, and meant mischief. The last sounds appeared to be about 300 yards distant. This was an exciting time, for at any moment we might expect them in our midst, and to seize some of the oxen or the horse. All was still as death, except when the Kaffirs threw more wood on the fires. After waiting nearly an hour, the first indication of their presence was the restlessness of the oxen and horse, having scented them in the still air ; but with all the glare of the fires they were not visible, the bush being so thick. We each took our rifles and stood between the oxen and the wood. The first warning sound was from my Hottentot driver, Dirk, who called out, "Look sharp," and the next moment the report of his rifle. I was standing by his side, and saw the lion, not thirty paces from us, turn round, when I gave him a second bullet. He appeared to be severely wounded, as he only retreated a little distance, when he received a third from my driver, which brought him to the ground, and another in the head to make sure : a fine, full-grown lion. The other we never saw, he must have made his escape at the first shot. Early in the morning, to save time, I had him skinned, and inspanned to make my morning trek

before breakfast. Two treks a day, morning and evening, nine miles each, if possible, but in this country you must be guided by water. The smell of the lion-skin at the back of the waggon made the oxen trek so fast that it was difficult to keep them under command. It is a very strange fact that calves born in the colony, grown into oxen, that have never seen or smelt a lion, should be so frightened at even the smell. Instinct, I suppose, tells them they are no friends. Those who have never seen a lion in his wild state can have no idea what a noble-looking animal he is. My driver Dirk was elated at having given the first shot, being the first lion he ever shot at. Every night in these parts we heard them at a distance. Wolves came every night. A few nights after, one came close to the waggon about midnight, not thirty yards away. I merely took my rifle as I sat up in my bed and shot him in the chest—one of those large-spotted brown sort. They smelt the raw meat at the back of the waggon. Wild dogs also this year came in large packs; they may be seen in one district for a short time, then they disappear for months. It is the same with the lions. The tiger (leopard) seldom leaves his haunts.

The distance from Motsodie to the Great Marico river road is forty-seven miles, from thence to the junction of the Notuane river with the Limpopo, seventy-four miles. On the road from whence I

crossed the Notuane river to the Great Marico road, the country is very dry and sandy, but the bush in places is very lovely. A great fire was raging on our right and coming down upon us with a strong wind ; there was no means of escaping it, as high grass was in every direction, by trying to get past it ; I therefore held still, set fire to the grass on our left of the road, which went blazing away at a great speed, that soon cleared a large extent of ground, where I brought my waggon into a safe position ; if I had not done this, the waggon and all would have been destroyed.

These grass-fires are very injurious to vegetation, killing the young trees and causing grass of a very coarse kind. This transport river road in dry weather is splendid, level and free from stones ; some of the sluits are bad to cross. At the junction of the Great Marico river with the Limpopo is a drift through the latter, and a pinkish granite crops up on its banks. Wishing to have a swim, I took my towels from the waggon, and walked towards the river. On arriving at the bank, which is some fifty feet above the water, I saw on the sand beneath me a fine crocodile, on the opposite sandbank, for the water was very low, three others basking in the sun below me, and two in the water, with a part of their heads and backs out. Those on the opposite side saw me first, for they moved towards the water slowly, and entered it and

disappeared, without making the slightest ripple in the water ; their bright colours made them look anything but ugly. I thought it advisable to defer my bath to some more favourable opportunity. At this point Sechele's territory terminates and the Chief Khama's begins.

At the junction of the Notuane and Limpopo there are two drifts. At the upper one I had to repair before I could take my waggon through, which caused me a day's delay ; I therefore fixed my camp under a very pretty clump of trees on the bank, where we were in the evening fully occupied in shooting wolves, this being a very noted place for them. Having shot a hartebeeste in the morning, we employed the evening in making biltong of the flesh, and placed it on the branches of the trees to dry, as it was getting dark, for in this latitude ( $23^{\circ} 30'$ ) immediately under the Tropic of Capricorn, night sets in very soon after sundown. Several wolves came round the waggon ; I thought at first in the dim light they were dogs, but soon discovered my mistake. We then made a plan to catch them, by placing two pieces of the raw meat about fifty yards from our camp, fastening them to a stump of a tree, just before the moon rose at ten o'clock, that we might see them when they came ; then we all took up our position with our rifles, and waited. About eleven o'clock three large ones were seen coming from out of the wood towards the baits, which they

soon found and seized, but the pieces were too firmly tied for them to take away, and then they began fighting over them, when two more made their appearance, creating quite a scene. It was then time to fire, and our four bullets settled two ; the others before we could reload made off, although one was wounded as he made his escape. Bringing the two dead ones to the camp, we watched a short time longer, when another was seen coming on, and when in the act of trying to drag the meat away, we shot him also, and another soon afterwards, making four, and very large ones. The next day they were skinned, as they are very useful for many purposes, and the day after, I shot a crocodile as he seemed asleep on the bank. He measured eleven feet. Being only a short distance from the Limpopo river, which is broad and in places very deep, these reptiles seem to swarm ; and its well-wooded banks give shelter to hundreds of monkeys, and also to many beautiful birds.

At the junction of the Notuane river with the Limpopo, the altitude is 2880 feet at the drift, which is one of the main roads from Pretoria in the Transvaal to the trading-station Mongwato, and the Chief Khama's capital ; the distance by road from the drift is seventy-three miles. The territory of Sechele, which also includes those portions now claimed by the petty chiefs Linsey at Motsodie, and Maklapan at Chene Chene, are valuable and well-wooded dis-

tricts, with many native kraals ; the people cultivate the land, use ploughs, and grow corn which supplies largely the inhabitants on the border of the Transvaal, and is taken in exchange for English goods through traders from the Cape Colony, and they also rear large herds of cattle. If a settled form of government is established, and Boer invasions put down, the country will soon become highly valuable as a market for British merchandise, as the natives are very industrious, and quite alive to the importance of trade ; most of the beautiful karosses that find such a ready sale in the home markets are made by the Bechuana people. In all these chiefs' territories they are excellent mechanics, manufacturing tools and utensils from native iron, and good forges are now being introduced. They have hitherto used for heating their metal, air-bags, connected by a tube, one placed under each arm, which they press to their side, which causes a blast sufficient to melt or heat the metal, which they hammer into form with stones. But this primitive mode is going out of use, and the ordinary bellows is being adopted. They purchase extensively of colonial traders, iron pots, kettles, saucepans, and tin utensils, as also every kind of wearing apparel, and if the country is protected from Boer marauders, the British merchant may look forward at no distant date to an extension of trade in these regions, over and above the present sales, up

to several millions annually, as the great stride towards civilization during my time has been most satisfactory. Twenty years ago, where one trader's waggon went in, in 1880 there were fifty, which was stopped on the retrocession of the Transvaal to the Boers, when a collapse took place, and has continued through the murderous attacks and robbery of the Boers on the natives, but which, I trust, will now be put an end to by the British Government proclaiming a protectorate over all this extensive and valuable region.

## CHAPTER X.

The Chief Khama's territory of the Bakalihari tribe of the Bechuan family.

FROM the last outspan on the Notuanc, at the junction of the Limpopo, mentioned in the last chapter, the road for eight miles is close to the bank of the Limpopo river, where I had some fishing, but instead of catching any fish, I caught a young iguana, two feet long, and had great difficulty to land him. It was necessary to kill the beast to release the hook. At the bend of the river the road turns north-west, and goes on to Ba-Mongwato. There are several cattle-posts at the bend belonging to Khama's people and the traders at that station. There are some very fine trees, and also immense ant-hills, of the same kind as those at Motsodie. I measured one, twenty feet high and nearly sixty feet in circumference, made by these little white ants; my waggon looked quite small beside it.

The climate here is very peculiar, hot sun, 99° in the shade, with cold blasts of wind every four or five minutes in regular waves, reducing the heat to 70°,

which we feel very cold. This is one great cause of rheumatism and fever. To-day was almost melting with heat ; I took shelter under the waggon, but had not been there three minutes when I had to get into the waggon, being so cold from the wind, which feels as if it came from a frozen region. If in a violent perspiration, fever comes on, if care is not taken to prevent a chill. The road from this place to Mon-guato is fifty-five miles. In the dry season there are only three places where water can be obtained.

On one of the tributaries of the Limpopo is a circular rock in the veldt, no other stones near it, fifteen feet in diameter, and similar in shape to a ball cut through the centre, and placed on the ground, only it belongs to the rock beneath the soil. This rock has been covered with carvings, the greater portion of which have been rubbed nearly smooth by large animals rubbing against it, giving it quite a polish. Sufficient lines are left to show it has been well cut with some sort of figures, and on one side where it curves in a little, and is out of the way of elephants, rhinoceros, and other animals, the carvings are nearly perfect. They represent paths with trees and fruit on each side ; upon one is a snake crawling down with a fruit or round ball in its mouth, near it is a figure, and a little distance off another figure with wings, almost like an iguana, flying towards a man who is running away ; his left foot is similar to that



ANCIENT CARVINGS ON A ROCK NEAR A BRANCH OF THE LIM'OPO RIVER TAKEN IN OCTOBER 1966



of a horse, the right one has two points, evidently Satan ; the intermediate spaces have many stars. The upper part of the stone has, in the centre, a small hollow of a cup-shape, with two circles of the same round the centre one. It is a very interesting monument, and appears to be very old, from the fact of the other portions being partly obliterated by the rubbing of animals against it. The rock is very hard and similar to those several geologists call igneous. There are many rocks of the same description, with carvings of animals, snakes, and figures on them, and from their position they have been preserved from animals defacing them. In several parts of the country many of them are well executed.

A few days previous to my arrival here in 1877, three Boers, with their waggons, were endeavouring to find a new drift in the Limpopo river, and went in to cross to the opposite side. They had nearly reached the bank, when the foremost looked round and saw a large crocodile come up from the water and seize the head of the last man between his jaws, and disappear with him. His name was Herman, a married man, twenty-six years of age. Nothing more was seen of him but blood in the water. His widow, a few months after, consoled herself with another husband. At this time, soon after the British Government had annexed the Transvaal, the Boers, wherever I met them, were always friendly—so much so, that I have often been

invited to take one of their daughters for a wife. They were rather proud to have an Englishman for a son-in-law. I was outspanned not many weeks back at a very pretty pool of water, or spring, the water of which fell into the Notuane river, in what is termed the Bush Veldt, that I might have a little shooting. The second day an old Boer and his wife came to me to ask if I would buy some ostrich feathers, taking me to be a trader, for all Englishmen travelling through the country will do a little in the way of barter; therefore I told them if they were good I would. When coffee was handed to them as a matter of custom, they asked where my wife was. On stating I was single, the old vrow said I must have one of her daughters; she had two mooi (pretty) girls, and would bring them the next day for me to see when she brought the feathers. Accordingly, the next day, true to her promise, she came with the old man and her two girls to the waggon; both very young, the eldest not more than seventeen, and not bad-looking for Dutch girls, apparently very modest and shy, with a conscious look of what they were brought for. After settling about the feathers, the old mother pointed out her daughters to me, and told me, pointing to the eldest, she would make me a mooi vrow, and that she had a farm of her own and some stock. Both the girls, sitting together by their mother, looked down and giggled every now and again, giving

me sly glances from beneath their cappies (the usual covering for the head for old and young), and then another giggle. They had evidently been got up for the occasion by their smart dresses, well-made English boots, and clean white stockings, to show off a pretty foot and ankle, which certainly they both possessed, and were not backward in showing. This is very unusual, they generally have clumsy feet. When at home these articles are never worn, only leather shoes called veldtscoons, which the men make. They say—which is quite true—that stockings are dirty when you walk about in a sandy country. However, after a long visit, coffee and biscuits, I arranged that on my return I would come and pay them a visit, and talk over the matter, as my opinion was either of them would make excellent wives, and left the best of friends. The old woman's last words were, "You can take my daughter as soon as you come for her," and an encouraging glance from the daughter terminated this interesting meeting, enhanced, as it was, by the anticipation of having the felicity soon to possess so charming a young lady. I have had many such offers from Boers, who were favourable to Englishmen at that time. However, unfortunately my pursuits called me in another direction.

The country between the Limpopo and Ba-mangwato, the Chief Khama's station, is very pretty, plenty of guinea-fowls, partridges, and pows. Far

away from the road on the left, seven miles from the bend of the Limpopo, is a large pan where lions are always known to be, and beyond is Brackwater, where ten years before I lost an ox from out of my cattle-kraal one dark night when outspanned. It is the custom with all travellers when in the Lion Veldt to kraal their cattle at night. Seventeen miles beyond Brakwater are the Khamitsie Pits, where water seldom fails, and close to them is a large dry pan quite a mile in length. The road passing round at the upper end, and fifteen miles beyond, winds through the veldt into the ancient river-bed leading to Monguato. The whole country for hundreds of miles is one continuation of wood, inhabited by a few Bushmen. The country for so many months without water is uninhabitable, except at the springs. The distance by this river-road from Molapololo to Mongwato is 164 miles.

Ba-mangwato, or Shoshong, is the chief town of Khama. The chief Sekomo ruled at this station, until Machin, his brother, drove him from the chieftainship, and at Machin's death, after considerable fighting, Khama, son of Sekomo, became the chief of the people over this territory. They belong to the Bakalihari tribe of the Bechuana family. It is a very important station, situated at the foot of a long range of beautiful hills, and up an opening in the range, where an ancient river-bed passes through, and where

the mission-station and church are situated, it is one of the most romantic valleys in this part of the country. When I first knew the station, the Rev. Mr. Mackenzie had charge, now the Rev. Mr. Hepburn lives in a very comfortable house up this kloof. The hills are formed of various kinds of sandstone of a brown colour. At the back, some distance beyond the church, is a very singular hill, with a perpendicular cliff on the upper portion. The stratification makes it look like a regular wall, with its horizontal layers so regularly placed. In Sekomo's and Machin's time the town was much larger, but since the wars it is considerably diminished. The chief Khama lives in the lower town, and has only one wife, being a good Christian and a great help to the missionary. The traders' stores are also in the lower town, and form quite a little village by themselves. Messrs. Francis and Clark have a fine store, and a building which is occasionally used as a concert-hall by the traders, who sometimes muster in considerable numbers, and out of so many a good band is got together. Most of those stationed there are splendid musicians, both vocally and instrumentally, so that many an enjoyable evening is spent to break the monotony of a life so far removed from the outer world. They have also their cricket matches, horse races, lawn tennis, football, and other sports. Mr. Hepburn is indefatigable in his mission labour in civilizing the natives, combined with the

good example set them by the traders at the station. The chief Khama is a gentleman in every sense of the word. I have met him and felt much pleasure in his society. He has prohibited spirits being sold to his people, and on my last visit but one he did me a great service, and helped me in the most kind way by taking charge of my oxen when I had been two days without water, having arrived at Mongwato expecting to obtain some, but there was not a drop, not sufficient even for the people. On hearing of my arrival, he came down and took my oxen in his charge, sent them with one of his herds to his cattle-post eighteen miles away on the River Mokalapse, to the north of the town, and kept them there for twelve days, until I could trek to Matabeleland. He requires all travellers who enter his territory to call upon him, that he may know who is passing through, in case they require any help he can give. Those who avoid doing so, if they get into trouble, must get out of it the best way they can. All the roads from the south meet at Mongwato ; one goes to Lake N'gami, another to the Chobe, two to the Zambese, and one main road to the Matabele-land, with branches leading to the Victoria Falls.

The people at one time were very unruly and troublesome to travellers. In 1868 I was at the station when a trader came in with some brandy ; we outspanned close together outside the town. The next day the traders at the station, and there were

some fourteen, indulged too much ; one in particular had so far forgotten himself as to take a leg of pork to the kotla or council enclosure, where the chief Machin was sitting with his councillors, and held the leg of pork in the chief's face, and asked if he liked the smell. These Kaffirs are like the Jews with respect to pork. This created an uproar in the station, the trader was severely beaten, and the whole town turned out to kill all the white men. They, hearing of this, fortified themselves in their stores. Hundreds of Kaffirs paraded the town, visiting the waggons with their knobkerry and assagai, threatening destruction to all white men. The course which I thought best to take was to sit on my front waggon-box and smoke my pipe, time after time hundreds surrounding my waggon, raising their assagais as if to hurl them at me, and brandishing their kerries. Knowing the Kaffir character pretty well, I went on smoking as if they were most friendly, and seeing they could make no impression, they rushed away to other parts of the town. At last the chief sent round some of his councillors to all white men, ordering them all out of the town, bag and baggage, by four o'clock the next day. Mr. Mackenzie, the missionary, left the day before to go to England. Not having anything particular to do, I, with the trader who came in with me, inspanned in the evening to trek towards Selene Pan, forty-five

miles on the road to Molapololo, which we reached the following afternoon, and all that night and the next day traders came trekking in, until thirty-six waggons had assembled and nearly fifty span of oxen, which looked more like a commando than traders flying from the wrath of a powerful chief. It was a very pretty sight. The man who committed this insult was too ill to be removed, and was left behind. He recovered, and, I think, became a wiser man. If it had occurred a few years before, he would have been killed, and the traders also. He richly deserved the punishment he received. This will show that the Kaffirs at that time had been brought under great control, for no greater offence could be given than an insult to their chief. Some little time after this affair, the chief, when solicited, allowed the traders to return.

The chief Khama dresses well, and looks like a gentleman. Many of his people also dress, as well as the women. They are strong and well-made; some still wear their skin dresses and a profusion of beads and brass rings, but I think in a few years these will be abandoned for European clothes. Begging is still largely practised, particularly for tobacco. They cultivate corn, mealies, pumpkins, melons extensively, and have large herds of cattle of all kinds, which are kept at the different posts away from the town, and milk is brought in on pack-oxen to those who have no

cows. They also make Kaffir beer from their Kaffir corn, and, if well made, it is very nice. This is the only extensive interior trading-station in this region. There are other trading-stations beyond : at Tati gold-fields, and in Matabeleland, and also at Ponta-matinka, where Mr. G. Westbeach has a large store, and others beyond, and also on the north side of the Zambese river, where a large and increasing trade is now being carried on by the English traders at the chief Secheke's on the north side of the Zambese.

The main direct road from Molapololo to Mongwato runs N.N.E. through a bush country with fine trees. The distance is 133 miles, and very pretty, the formation being argillaceous limestone ; most of the hills are sandstone. At a fountain at Koopan, twenty miles on this road, are some large masses of sandstone rocks, standing out like walls of an old castle that cover an extensive area. In these rocks are many fossil remains of seeds, nuts, shells, ammonites, and one trilobite, also many footprints of animals. As it was impossible to obtain them, I remained two days to make correct sketches and measurements, being most interesting specimens. In many parts of the interior, where this light sandstone has been exposed by denudation, particularly in the deep beds of those dry rivers in the Kalahara, footprints are very numerous, which I have taken great care to copy, and also all the carvings on the rocks. The other permanent waters on this road

are Bartlanarme in the chalk-pits, and Lepepe, also Selene pan. Both are favourite localities for the giraffe, and here I have remained several days to hunt them, and was fortunate enough to shoot one out of five that were coming to drink. Eight miles from Bartlanarme we shot two out of seven, and at another time Mr. Hume, of Port Elizabeth, a hunter, came upon several, and shot three from the saddle, from my horse, which I lent him. One we had brought to the waggon, and left the other two for the bushmen. The flesh is very fine. It is a pity such beautiful animals should be destroyed merely for food and skins. In this part almost every variety of game is to be found. Such a vast extent of open country—where the white man is never seen beyond the transport-road, and its inhabitants bushmen only,—extending in an uninterrupted forest westward 500 miles, and the same in breadth, is no small hunting-ground to roam over for a hunter to pick his game. Twenty years ago, I may say up to 1875, game, as well as lions, wolves, and other beasts of prey, were much more numerous than at the present time. In the north and west of Khama's country up to the Zambeze, along the Zouga river are the great Makarakara pans, and others ; the large game such as elephants, rhinoceros, buffalo, and giraffe, were plentiful, but of late years many hunters have been for months and scarcely met with any.

The country along the Zouga river is very level. This river enters, or, I may say, empties Lake N'gami, the altitude being 2813 feet, and flows to the great pan above-named in April and May, and in June and July flows into the lake. The only outlet for the surplus water of the Zouga is the Mababe river to the Chobe, one of the main streams of the Zambese, and the water in the Mababe flows either way according to the rainfall, showing the perfect level of the country. Gigantic trees grow along these rivers and the region adjoining; baobab, measuring 108 feet in girth, the palms, mapana, and other tropical trees and plants. A great portion of this country the chief Khama claims, where there are many kraals of the Makalaka, Batletle, Barutse, Bakalihari, and others, also many of the Massara bushmen, and a few Hot-tentots and Korannas. This region is a portion of the Zambese basin, and the northern part is infested with the tsetse fly, the sting or bite of which is fatal to horses and cattle; but I have been told by the natives, that if calves and colts are bred in the fly-country, they are proof to the bite. We know that all the game in those districts are not affected by the bite, and that may be the reason.

The sickly season is from September to May. Many parts are open, with little bush; another part of the desert is thick bush, and very scarce of water in the dry season, and is a part of what is called thirst land

(thirst) from the dryness of the country, and where the trek Boers suffered so much in their journey to the westward in 1877. In that year I was at Mongwato, and came in for my share a few months later, when there in October of that year. Mr. Harry Shelton, who had a large store at Leshulatibus station, Lake N'gami, was coming to Mongwato with several of his waggons for goods, and two saddle-horses he had with him, having trekked 150 miles along the road which skirts the River Zouga; he was obliged to leave his waggons and oxen, as no water would be found between that place and Mongwato, a distance of 160 miles, and came on with his two horses, but on the road was obliged to leave one of them from exhaustion, and managed to come in with the other, and was obliged to be lifted from the saddle on his arrival, having been nearly four days without water. On his return fourteen days after, he expected, of course, to see the horse dead and eaten by lions; but he found him standing by the same bush he was left at, and he recovered. This shows how long a horse may live under such circumstances. Horses, however, knock up far sooner than oxen from thirst. The lions and wolves must have forsaken the country as well as the game, otherwise the horse would have been eaten. Most of his oxen had died on his return, principally from licking the moist mud in the pans and river. When so many days without water they cannot drink

when brought to it. The only means then of preserving their lives is to throw buckets of water over them ; but this does not always succeed. Such are the trials and hardships we have to put up with in a region so liable to long seasons of drought, and where the country is so destitute of springs or standing water. But with all these drawbacks there is a fascination that impels one on to explore these remote and little-known regions. The bright and clear atmosphere, the lovely mornings and evenings for travelling, the constant change of scene, the splendid tints of the sunsets, and variety of foliage of the vegetation, the calmness of everything around, and the constant excitement of strange game to be seen, is a pleasure we can seldom enjoy, and, as I have before stated, the only true enjoyment in Africa is waggon travelling in the interior, where time is not limited.

“ There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,  
There is a rapture by the lonely shore,  
There is society where none intrudes  
By the deep sea, and music in its roar.”

*Byron.*

The watershed dividing the Zambese and the Limpopo basins runs to the east of the great Makarakara pans, in a N.E. direction through the Mashona and Matabele country, and from the S.W. to the Kalahara Desert near Kaikai Pits, the elevation being 4260 feet above sea-level.

The principal antelopes of this region are the eland, koodoo, gemsbok, sable, and leechy or lechi, pallah, ourebi, bonte, rooy, reit, bush and steinboks, springbok, hartebeast, giraffes, and grysbok, and the zebra, and many other kinds, which are all to be found in different localities ; and legions of the antbear, porcupine, earth-wolf, earth-pig, spring-hare, meer-cats, and other smaller animals ; wild boar and wild dogs are seen in large packs, sometimes only a few are together, consequently with the larger game there is always plenty of sport to be found, if hunting is the sole amusement ; but, combined with natural history, geology, and other sciences, an explorer has not much idle time on his hands. Locusts made this part their breeding-ground, depositing their eggs by the million, and in October there would be immense tracts of country covered with them several inches deep. Before their wings came, and as the waggons travelled along the roads, thousands were killed at every turn of the wheels. The natives eat them, and some cattle are very fond of them also. It is nearly seven years since any have been seen in South Africa. There are many kinds of wild teas found in the veldt, which I have used for months, and like them. Fine forests of timber occupy a large portion of this region, other parts are more properly termed bush, although many trees grow in them, and extensive open plains. The fine flat-topped kameel doorn is very common,

palms, baobab, bockenhout or African beech, zuikerbosh, acacia, Kaffir orange, ebenhout or ebony, yellow wood or yeelhout, knopjis, doorn or lignum vitæ, cabbage-tree, mahogany, sneezewood, wild olive and fig, stinkwood, salicwood, Orlean wood or African oak, vittkut, mimosa thorn, wagt-een-beitje, the African name is mongharn, and a host of other trees; tuberous roots of many varieties, some eaten by the natives, and are used medicinally, and others would make good paper—an endless variety of herbs, of which we at present know but little.

The insect world is legion, immense hairy spiders, and also the trap-door spider is a wonderful creature, the mechanism of hinge, door, and entrance are perfect works of art.

I was told by some of the people at Mongwato that there are in Khama's territory over 200 cattle-posts, in addition to vich-posts for sheep and bucks. The main and only transport-road from Mongwato to the Mata-beleland passes along by the east end of the range of hills by the town, through a thick bush to the Mokalapie river, thirty miles, a large and broad stream in the rainy season. Upon its banks are many cattle-posts, and it is much visited by lions. From this river the road continues in a N.N.E. direction, crossing the metley or sand river, Tuane, on to Chakani pan, distant from Mongwato fifty-four miles, one of the most lovely spots on this road, where I spent

three weeks exploring. I outspanned under a clump of trees close to the pan, but had to shift my waggon into the open, the trees being full of tree-toads, and large lizards occupied every hole in them. The toads would drop down on to my waggon and make themselves very comfortable on my boxes and bed. The large lizard had every look of being a dangerous reptile to have a bite from. They were beautifully marked, the front of the head had a well-shaped heart of a silver grey, with a well-shaped letter Y of a rich red brown. I endeavoured to obtain a specimen, but could not get them to come out.

There are some very fine specimens of the euphorbia and lotus-trees away in the bush, and also fine timber trees of other kinds. My delay here for three weeks was compulsory, as there was no water to be had beyond this point for 150 miles. This being part of the doorst land, and as the season had been very dry, all the pans were empty. I was compelled to wait until the storms, which are usual at this time of year (October), filled them. The last week of my stay severe thunderstorms were seen in the north every afternoon, which gave me hope of a good supply on the road, and occasionally we had severe storms at the pan, but not a drop of rain fell. The lightning was terrific ; and the thunder following, rolling over the hills and forest-trees, shaking the very ground, was grand. I always kept from three to

four days' supply of water in my waggons, in casks and iron cans, never leaving without having them filled, which I personally looked to. But in this case I omitted doing so, thinking my driver would attend to it, as I had been out early in the saddle after game, and arrived at the waggon as the oxen were inspanned ready to go forward, as I fully believed water would be plentiful; therefore, on leaving Chakani pan, I thought we were full up with water, instead of which we had only a day's supply. To give a clearer insight what travelling is in a parched-up country like this, where rain has not fallen for six months, I will quote from my journal a week's trek through it.

*Tuesday, October 16th.*—Left Chakani pan at 9 a.m. Travelled over very heavy sand for nine miles to a large open vlei called Lemonie, which, when full of water, is nearly a mile in length, a great resort for wild fowl and that beautiful bird the berg swallow, the size of a dove, with a brilliant golden copper-colour plumage on the back, and light salmon colour and sky-blue breast. This pan is surrounded by gentle rising ground with bush, where I endeavoured to secure some of those small birds that are rare even here, being of a dark golden-purple, and less in size than our common wren at home. Finding no water, I proceeded on to Lotsane river, nine miles, and outspanned for the night; no water. Found for the first time all our water-casks empty, my driver having

forgotten to fill them at Chakani pan. Having explored up and down the river without finding any, after one kettle of coffee being made, went to bed, with the hope of finding water to-morrow.

*Wednesday, 17th, 4 a.m.*—Sent my driver out and went myself to look for water; no signs of any. Trekked three miles and outspanned to give oxen a feed on green young grass, as they have not had water since Monday afternoon. Went without coffee this morning to reserve what little we have for our mid-day meal, then it will be exhausted. This is the first time for twelve years I have been without water by my waggon.

*Thursday, 18th.*—Retraced my steps six miles, as I met a Boer with his two waggons, who told me he had got a bushman to show him where the oxen could get water, about two miles off the road, in the bush. Sent my span and boys down to it, but the water was so muddy I could not drink it, filled two bottles, such as it was. The Boer told me I could get good water eight miles beyond Phalasque vlei, the pan being a mile to the right of the road, then I could get water along the road to carry me to the Tati river; consequently, shall start early to-morrow to reach it.

*Friday, 19th.*—Inspanned at 4 a.m. No sign of rain, although plenty of storms. Trekked on to Phalasque vlei; no water. Then pushed on over a fearful sandy road at the rate of one and a half miles an hour.

Thermometer 94° in the waggon. This is a God-forsaken country, no people, no game, no birds, no water, nothing but hot sandy roads to travel over, but beautifully wooded and fine grass. Reached the spot described by the Boer, saddled up to look for the pan, found two, both dry. Trekked on another five miles, and outspanned for the night, no water for man or beast ; my forelooper drank up what little remained in the night. He is what is termed a Cape boy, a perfect beast in the way of eating and drinking. My driver, a Hottentot, is a fine fellow, good at everything.

*Saturday, 20th.*—Sent Dirk forward early to look for water ; went as far as Surely Kop, nine miles, where I had always found water in the pan, but it was dry and hard. It was now getting serious, as I knew if this pan failed, there was very little chance of getting any this side of Tati, so I turned back six miles and remained the night where I had previously slept. Fortunately the grass was young and green for the oxen, which relieved them to some extent. No water these last two days, not a drop in the waggon ; I have brandy, but could not take any, a small teaspoonful the stomach would not retain. To eat is out of the question, I have tried several times, but cannot swallow.

*Sunday morning, 21st.*—Inspanned and retraced our steps six miles, as I intend to return to Chakani pan,

where I know there is water. My driver asked for his rifle, as he would take a bushman-path through the bush, which he thought would lead to water. He left me about 11 a.m. All that day he never returned, which has given me great anxiety, knowing the country swarms with lions. All night kept firing off my rifle that he might know my whereabouts. At daybreak the wolves and jackals began to let me know they were not far off.

*Monday, 22nd.*—Dirk, my driver, not returned. I shall never see him any more! Passed a fearfully anxious night; my thirst is intense; fourth day without a drop of liquid passing my lips. To stay here is death! Set to work with my forelooper, inspanned the oxen, and travelled night and day to reach Chakani. Arrived at Phalasque vlei at 11 a.m. Outspanned to give them a little green grass before going on. No sooner were they free from the yoke than they started off through the bush evidently after water. My loopboy I sent after them to bring them back, but instead of following them, he went behind some bushes and sat down. There I remained alone with my waggon in the dry veldt, my driver, as I thought, killed by lions, and now my oxen gone, and my boy nearly dead. The weather intensely hot, 106° in the shade. I have only one chance; leave the waggon and all my belongings to be plundered by the bushmen, and walk to Chakani, a distance of

thirty miles. Whilst revolving this plan in my head, a bushman came from under the trees to me. I made him understand I wanted him to fetch me a small tin of water; I offered him powder, caps, and other things, worth about two pounds, but he said it was far, pointing with his finger in the direction, and left me. I never saw him again. Having made up my mind to start the next morning by daybreak, with my rifle and a few biscuits, for the water, as it would not be safe at night for lions, I heard some footsteps coming on; looking in the direction, saw my driver Dirk within a hundred yards. Never was I more pleased to see a human being, and gave him a good shake of the hand, but he brought no water. He told me after he left the waggon, the day before, he walked on for hours until it got dark, and he wandered about looking for water, so that he lost the direction he came. Hearing several lions, he selected a nice tree and climbed up, where he spent the night, and shot two large wolves. At daybreak he climbed down and found five bushmen looking about, when they saw him they came up; he asked for water, but they said there was none, which Dirk believes was not true. They wanted to look at the gun, but he was wise enough to keep it from them; seeing he was alone, they might have kept it. However, he left them by the two dead wolves, and managed to strike the road, and saw the spoor of my waggon, and followed it down to where I

was outspanned. When I told him of the forelooper and the oxen he said he would go at once and follow their spoor, otherwise we should never see them again, and asked for a little brandy to wash his mouth out, for he, as well as myself, could not articulate plainly, and then started after them about 5 p.m. I was again left alone to pass another sleepless night, and the fifth day without water or food. I frequently rinsed my mouth out with brandy, which kept my tongue from swelling. It was a lovely moonlight night, and, under other circumstances, I should have enjoyed it amazingly, for the country round was peculiar for the many stone koptjies, 150 feet in height, large masses of granite, piled up in most grotesque forms, with flowering plants growing between them. To pass away this anxious time I took my rifles to inspect them; on my return I found my poor little terrier dog on the point of death. I took him up in my lap, and with a piteous shriek he fell dead. Poor little thing, he must have suffered acutely. My other dog, "Bull," died on Sunday, so here I am alone, 150 miles from any white man. Once more passed the night smoking on my waggon-box, the only thing that I could do, and about 11 a.m., on Tuesday 23rd, as I was lying down in my waggon, I caught the sound of oxen's feet on the road, which proved to be mine, with my driver and forelooper bringing them on, and holding up a can to show me they had water. What a relief!

we are saved!—for I was far too weak to walk alone 150 miles, and carry a rifle and food for so long a journey. My driver told me after he left yesterday to follow up the spoor of the oxen, he found my boy asleep under a bush, about a mile from the waggon, and took him with him, and after six hours' walk came upon the oxen, where they had been drinking at a kind of swamp in a valley, and some twelve miles from the road we had travelled a few days before. Five bushmen were driving them over the brow of the hill to be out of sight of any one looking after them. Dirk fired his rifle to give them notice that some one was near, when the bushmen dispersed out of sight, and he brought back the oxen as before stated. Five minutes later, and it might have been too late. It was a most fortunate recovery for us all, and for me in particular. The water, about three pints brought, was worth much more to us than its weight in gold. I took a few teaspoonsful at a time, and with the rest we made some tea, and soon after inspanned and treked to Chakani pan, there to wait again for rain. After we had been a week there a very singular affair occurred. It happened to be one of those dark stormy nights without rain; my driver and the boy were sleeping in a tent attached to the waggon. About 2 a.m. he woke me and said there was some kind of an animal wanted to get under the waggon, being pursued by two others. It had twice got under, and being dis-

turbed by the driver, left, but kept going round, still followed by two others. I was up with my rifle, for in these parts we are soon ready for what may turn up. At last the poor beast, whatever it was, took safety between the two after oxen as they were fastened to the waggon, and stood there quite quiet; the other two that followed stood a little way off. By stooping low to get the animal above the horizon, we found it was a large rooi buck, and the others were wild dogs that had been chasing it, until all three were completely exhausted, and could run no more. Jumping from the waggon I tried to get a fair shot at the dogs, but the uncertain light prevented my making a good shot. While so engaged my driver shot the poor buck that had come to us for safety, which I was very sorry for, as I wished to shoot the dogs, which we could have done as daylight was near, and then I would have let the poor beast go. One dog I did shoot, the other made his escape. On looking round the waggon in the morning the whole ground was covered with their spoor, and close to the waggon it was completely trampled; they must have run at least twenty miles before they came to us from the exhausted state they were in. The most remarkable circumstance was that a buck in a wild country like this, seldom seeing a waggon, should have had the sense to know, for it is not what is called instinct, and should feel if he could get under the waggon, his

pursuers would be afraid to follow, and he would be safe, so came to us for protection. I was much annoyed that my driver shot him, for he should certainly have had his liberty in the morning.

The foregoing will give a slight idea of some of the trials explorers meet with in travelling through regions where water is so scarce. I remained at this pan up to 14th November, having consumed all the water in the pan, and still no rain, fearful thunderstorms without any, I was compelled to fall back on Mongwato, and retrace my steps fifty-four miles to procure it. During my long stay at this pan I had very little sport, a few rooi bucks and guinea-fowl, also pheasants, partridges, and doves. I was always out with my gun, and my oxen grazed where they liked, knowing they would come for water once or twice a day, not thinking for a moment there were any dangerous animals near. But on the 14th, at 4 a.m., we were preparing coffee ready for a trek, when we saw two of the largest wild pigs I ever fell in with, come down to drink, not a hundred yards from the waggon, on the opposite side of the pan. One we soon secured, having received two shots, the other quickly escaped. This delayed us until 7 a.m. when we trekked, and had not gone a quarter of a mile, passing a little stone koptjie, with beautiful euphorbia and other trees, when we saw, as we thought, six rooi bucks out on the outskirts of the wood, and 200 yards from the road. Finding

they did not move, although they were looking at us, being in long grass we were deceived as to the nature of the animals, and when we were opposite we stopped. I and the driver jumped off the waggon with our rifles, with only one charge, and were walking up to them when they seemed to be walking down towards us. I was about to fire when Dirk called out, "Don't fire, they are tigers." Lowering the rifle to have a better look, sure enough they were six beauties, with their sleek spotted coats, which made them look very handsome. As we were at least fifty yards from the waggon, if we had fired with no more ammunition, and they had come down upon us, it would have been very awkward. We therefore stood our ground, watching them stretch themselves on the ground, and then stand up, looking at us with heads erect, until they quietly turned into the wood; and we followed their example, and turned into the waggon. It was no use attempting to follow them up, we were only two, and could do very little, and they might have done a great deal to us. This hill is about a hundred and fifty feet high, and almost daily I have walked round and over it with my shot-gun, and saw nothing but guinea-fowls. And so ended this little leopard affair, and we proceeded on our way towards Mongwato, sadly inconvenienced for want of water for the oxen. But at Mokalapsie river, by digging two feet in the sand between the granite rocks in its bed,

we obtained it in sufficient quantity to satisfy the oxen.

The lions have been a great trouble to those who keep cattle-posts on the river bank; only last night they killed a horse belonging to Mr. Francis. Many singular isolated conical hills, over a hundred feet in height, add greatly to the beauty of the scenery, but are great covers for the lion and leopard. Very warm, thermometer 102° in the shade. Everything very dry. Pushed on to Mongwato for water. On my arrival there was told there was no water for oxen, and if rain does not fall the people will have to leave the town and go down to the Limpopo river. The chief Khama came to me and said he would take charge of my oxen and horse, and send them to the same kraal he sent them before, if I would send a man to look after them, with one of his, and keep them until wanted. This kind offer was gladly accepted, consequently I had to wait for rain. On the 21st November a Boer came in and told me rain had fallen in the north, and that I could now trek up; but as the other Boer I had met on the road deceived me, I took no notice of the information, and it turned out he wilfully deceived me. I spent many pleasant evenings with the Rev. Mr. Hepburn and the traders at the station, musical parties at Francis' store, and cricket-matches in the day. Bought a muid of Boer meal, that is, wheat ground, for 4*l.* 10*s.*

the 200 lbs. A few days later we had a fine storm, with heavy rain, and on the 26th started again for the north, and arrived again at Chakani pan on the 30th, which was full of nice fresh water, and found a troop of ostriches drinking at it. From thence I pushed on, the grass being burnt up by the drought, and arrived at Gowkwe river, one of the tributaries of the Limpopo, as are all those I crossed from Mongwato. Two miles back from this, to the right of the road, is the first baobab-tree, a young one, twenty-seven feet in circumference, with several large nests, each forming quite a town. The entire country is a thick wood, stretching in every direction hundreds of miles. The belief does not hold good in this region that forests bring rain, for it is one of the driest parts of Central South Africa, and has been named thirst-land, from its proverbial dryness, as my experience can also testify. From December to the following May water may be obtained; the rest of the year it is like what I have already described, consequently game is scarce in the dry season; it always follows the rain.

From Gowkwe river the road continues on to the river Shasha, the boundary the chief Khama claimed when he gave me his boundary-line, but this the Matabele king disputes, and claims down to the Macloutsie river, and, in fact, all Khama's country, from previous conquest, but Khama holds possession. The road from Gowkwe crosses several rivers between

it and the Shasha. The Sand river is broad and pretty, and falls into the Macloutsie, which is about the same size, tributaries of the Limpopo. They rise in the hill district of the water-shed separating the Zambese basin from the Limpopo. The distance from Mongwato to the Shasha by road is 163 miles, crossing the Shasha river, where we find granite and gneiss rocks, the sand being very deep in its bed, which is about 100 yards broad, with very steep banks on both sides. No water is ever found in any of these rivers, except in the rainy season, and then it comes down with a rush, sometimes rising twenty feet, but lasts only a few days or weeks. This river, according to the chief Khama, is his northern boundary, but this Lo-Bengulu, the Matabele king, will not acknowledge. However, after crossing the river, the road continues north for six miles, and the Tati river is crossed, of the same size and character as the Shasha. On its northern bank is the Tati station, where there are a few houses occupied by English traders, and a few Boer families, and the ruins of the large building, once the store of the Tati Gold Company, under Sir John Swinbourne, which will be more fully described in a future chapter. The road branches off from the Tati station, runs in a N.W. direction nearly the entire way. The main road from Tati to Matabeleland runs nearly north. The roads through the western portion of Khama's territory leave Ba-Man-

gwato station and go west for thirty-five miles, where the road branches off at Khababa sand-pits from the Lake N'gami road, and continues north for 129 miles until the large brak vlei Makarakara is reached. Thirty miles from Khababa pits there are two roads at Loala, which join again at Makwa pits, a distance of sixty-four miles between the two. Thirty-five miles beyond is Berg fountain, close to the great vlei above named. The road continues along the eastern shore sixty-six miles to the N.E. point of the vlei, where the Natu falls into it. From the crossing of the Natu to Daka the road runs in a N.N.E. direction, the distance being 167 miles, passing many vleis, the principal ones treking north are Veremoklani, twenty miles, great Klabanyane, eighteen miles, Kamakanyane vlei, seventeen miles, Juruka vlei, Tamajo pan, Tamasitu vlei, Stoffolds vlei, Henricks vlei, Telukana vlei, which is twenty miles south of Daka. The road to Panda-ma-Tenka is eighteen miles, where Mr. George Westbeach has a large store, and is the principal trader for all that region, even to beyond the Zambeze river at Seshekese and the country round. He has a store there, and another nearer the Victoria Falls, seven miles beyond his large store. All this part of the country is drained by sluits running to the Zamboya river, which is a small tributary of the Zambeze, which enters it about sixty miles below the falls, which, together with another small branch, Lutuisi

river, that falls into the great river about ten miles below the Zamboya at a great bend of the Zambese, both passing through Wankie's territory, which now belongs to the Matabele king. From Mr. Westbeach's great store to the Victoria Falls is about thirty-two miles. At the falls, or above the fall, the river is nearly a mile in width, and is 2580 feet above sea-level. The perpendicular fall extends the whole way, falling into a narrow fissure to some 200 feet in depth, but the opposite or lower side is so close, and on nearly the same level with the upper fall, that it is impossible to see the bottom from the perpetual mist or spray that rises near the centre of the fall. The outlet of the water passes down a narrow gorge in a sort of zigzag shape, between lofty rocks, rushing down at a great speed until the river opens out. It is impossible to take any accurate drawings of the falls, there is no position in which an artist can take up a position to make an accurate drawing. I have seen many, but they are greatly deficient in portraying the falls as they are, or giving a correct idea of their magnificence. The island on the south side immediately on the brink of the fall adds much beauty to the scene. The tropical trees and plants growing everywhere about add an extra charm to the landscape. Thirty-seven miles above the falls the Chobe river, one of the main branches of the Zambese, comes in, which as described in the river basin system, forms

the northern boundary of the chief Khama's territory, that is, from the Victoria Falls to the Chobe, up that river for forty-five miles, then crosses the desert to the Sira pan on south, crossing the Zouga or Bot-let-le river to Dorokarra kraal in a S.W. direction to Mancopolo vlei, which is the extreme western point, then turns S.E., crossing the desert to Selene pan, which is forty-five miles south of Mongwato, then down to the junction of the Notuane and Limpopo. South of this line belongs to the chief Sechele, and the western boundary to the chief Molemo at Lake N'gami. The road from Walfish Bay to the Victoria Falls passes south of this lake to Batuana town, where the chief Molemo rules, along the south side of the Zouga to the town of Dorokarra, where it crosses on to the north side, past the tree with feet, going east along by the pits and pools, salt pan, seven palms, to Mahutu, then turns nearly north, and joins the other road from Mongwato, at Garuga, on to Panda-ma-Tenka, Mr. Westbeach's stores, and Victoria Falls, which are called Mosioatanga. The road to Mongwato from Molemo's town is the same to Dorokarra, then turns S.E., following the river to Kumadau lake or vlei, which is part of the Zouga river, then strikes east to Nchokotsa, and from thence S.E. to Mongwato, passing several pans, the most permanent waters being at Khakanye and Inkatsany lime-pits. Where the road leaves the Zouga there is a drift, and a road runs

due north, passing through the western end of the great Salt vlei Ntwetwe, on past the great baobab letter-tree, passing a salt-pan on the left, crossing the road going to the Victoria Falls, on to Kamakama, through the sandy forest of mahani-trees to the Mababe river and Linyanti on the Chobe, the chief Skeletu's town. Several other roads cross this part of the desert from Panda-ma-Tenka. The distance by road from Lake N'gami is 335 miles, that is, 170 from the lake to Kumadau lake, and 165 from there to Mongwato, consequently in a very dry season there is no water to be obtained in this last distance, and where the trek Boers, in 1877, lost so many of their people, oxen, and waggons. There are many hundred pans, but dry in winter. There is game of every kind all over this region, but they follow the water. The great brak pan, Makarakara, is also dry at that time. When water is in, it is over fifty miles, both north and south, quite an inland sea. Sand is everywhere, the roads are fearful, quite up to the Mababe river.

Many of the mapani-trees grow to a great size; the leaf has a sweet gummy sort of varnish, of which the elephants are very fond. The palm grows about forty feet in height; the wood is very hard, an axe with a hard blow will not penetrate. The gigantic tree, the baobab, grows extensively over all these regions. They are prominent objects in the country

through which you pass. Many of the stems exceed in circumference 100 feet; their height is not in proportion to the bole, few exceed eighty feet. The tree spreads and covers a large extent of ground; the bark is used to make ropes, and blankets can be manufactured from it. I obtained one, which is exceedingly strong. Bags are also made to hold water or milk. The fruit is used to make a refreshing drink. This tree is also called the Cream of Tartar; the fruit is similar and much larger than an ostrich egg. These trees are calculated to be, the largest of them, nearly 5000 years old.

The country generally is flat; there are a few hills down by the Zamboya and Lutuisi rivers to Wankie's, on the river, conical and flat-topped. But this part is out of Khama's territory. All east of Panda-ma-Tenka now belongs to the Matabele king. Wankie's people and town are now on the north side of the Zambese. To the west of that station is the Lechuma Valley. South of Daka the land rises gradually from the Victoria Falls, the falls being 2580 feet above sea-level, and the land south of Daka is 3900 feet at the highest point. The southern slopes gradually down to an altitude of 2813 feet near the great Salt vlei Makarakara. The sickly season is from September to May. South of the Zouga the land rises gradually until it reaches the central water-shed, at an altitude of 4260 feet. At all the permanent waters

and along the rivers are kraals occupied by many tribes, under the chief Khama, who, with the greater portion of his people, belongs to the Bakalihari tribe. The distance of the Victoria Falls from Ba-Mangwato is 400 miles, and the distance from Walfish Bay to the falls is 1150 miles.

## CHAPTER XI.

[This chapter includes the list of the Bechuana family in South Central Africa, and also of that portion lying to the north of this family, on to the Chobe and Zambese, which has not been fully described in the account given in the Kalahara Desert.]

## THE CHIEF MOLEMO.

THE territory claimed by this chief, a branch of the Bakalahari tribe of the Bechuana family, joins on to the Chief Khama's from the Makopolo Vlei, which is situated 110 miles south of the town of Batuana, where the Chief Molemo lives, along the former chief's boundary on to Sira pan, where it leaves Khama's territory, and strikes west to Kabats Hill on to the Mababe river, where the continuation of the Okavango falls in; up that river to the Tonga, then due south to Omdraai, Ghanz lime-pits to Makopolo Vlei, Lake N'gami being nearly in the centre of this chief's territory. All north and east of this lake is flat, and in many parts contains extensive swamps and lagoons, swarming with crocodiles, hippopotami, iguanos, snakes, and other creeping things. The miasma rising from these low-lying grounds, where the decomposition of all vegetation under the tropical sun brings

on fever, is very fatal to Europeans. During the dry season, from May to September, there is very little danger in travelling through this region. The Tonga, or as some call it, the Teoghe, the continuation of the Cubango, or as it is sometimes called, the Okavango Quito. Down the Tonga from the northern boundary are many rapids. The water entering the north-west point of Lake N'gami, the principal portion of the waters of the above rivers is lost in those extensive swamps, and eventually falls into the Chobe. Natives live on some of the islands and along their borders. Very fine timber, particularly the baobab, grow along these banks. The Zouga or Bot-let-le river, is the outlet of the waters of Lake N'gami, but the flow of water down the Tonga is not sufficient to keep even the lake full, consequently there is little surface-water to supply the Zouga. If there is at any time a great rush into the lake, the surplus water is carried to the Chobe, through the Mababe river, the southern portion of which is called the Tamahakan. The population is only to be found along the banks of the lake and rivers. Batuana is a large town with several traders who assisted me in many ways, and were very kind. Mr. Skelton was doing an extensive business; he formerly kept a store at Secheles, but he is since dead. The huts are circular, made of mud with high thatched roofs. The greater portion of the people dress in good English clothes. The father of Molemo,

Leshulitebes, was very fond of dressing well, and very partial to patent leather boots and a tall hat.

Bell Valley is on the south-west of the lake, where there are many large baobab-trees. Close to Mamahahue, a kraal on the Walfish Bay road, is an outspanning station. Beyond is Quarantine Vlei, Mokhokhotto, Sebubumpe, Konies, all within a radius of ten miles, occupied by the Batuanas, a branch of the Bakalahari tribe of the Bechuana family ; the same as the Chief Khama who, sixty years ago, came and settled here, subjugating the former people, and intermarried with them. Twenty miles from Molemo's town, is Lesatsilebes, another large kraal, Ma Tabbin, opposite where the Mababe flows out of the Zouga. The country north of the last-named river is intersected with Laagte, large and small pans in every direction ; sand everywhere, but good grass in the rainy season. On the south of the river the Nyabisani flats extend a long way up to Goose Vleis, south of the Makapolo hills, long open flats and thickly wooded in places, palms and every other tropical tree grow. Game of every kind is found in this region, but very wild. I shot a gemsbok early in the morning. They are pretty animals, rather larger than a zebra, nearly the colour of a donkey, with black marks down the back and along the flanks, whitish legs marked with black band, light face with black down the front, long black tail almost touching the ground, a stand-up

mane, and a long bunch of hair on the chest, horns perfectly straight with sharp points, and this one had horns three feet eight inches in length. They have been known to transfix a lion, they being found both dead together.

Roads from the lake branch off to Linyanti on the Chobe, to the Victoria Falls 320 miles, to Ba-Man-gwato 335 miles, to Secheles 350 miles, to Walfish Bay 680 miles, and to the Orange river 650 miles. The country over which this chief rules is comprised in the Kalahara Desert.

This country is on the south of the Zambese, the eastern boundary joins up to the Chief Khama's, and south by the Chief Molemo. The Chobe passes through the central part, from the west to where it enters the Zambese, thirty-seven miles above the Victoria Falls. It has often been a question which is the main stream of the Zambese, the Chobe, or the more northern branch. Between these two streams is the Barutsie Valley, and on the north bank of the Chobe is a large kraal, Linyanti, where the chief Skeletu resided.

For many years there have been continual wars going on between the Makopolo or Makololo and the Barutsie tribe, who lived on the north bank of the northern branch of the Zambese, under the chief Sesheke, fighting for the chieftainship. Skeletu is dead, Wana Wana was killed, and Sesheke, or as some spell his name, Sheheke, has been murdered by his

subjects for his cruelties. The country supports an immense number of cattle, and it is also the elephant country; so no European has been allowed to hunt in that region. The Makopolos or Makololos, once the most powerful tribe in this part of Africa, has been dispersed and destroyed, a few only escaping, and they now live with the mixed races along the several rivers. There are many kraals along the various streams, and in the hill district of Ngwa, intersected by many watercourses: Sekelula, Linyanti, are some of the most noted. The Kabats Hill is on the southern border. It is thickly wooded, with the Mapani tree, palms, baobab, and nearly all kinds of tropical plants, as also the wild grape. In the northern portion of the Barutsie Valley, on the banks of the Zambese, are also many important native kraals: Mosambo, Nambewe, Konye, Nobombo, Nomite, and others. As I have already stated, Shesheke lived on the north bank, as also Sekhosi, thirty miles higher up the river. This entire country is now under the chief of the Barutsie tribe. There is also a large native location higher up the Chobe beyond Linyanti, Matambaya, and many villages on its bank.

Wild cotton is abundant all over this country, which is suitable for its growth, and may be, if properly cultivated, the finest cotton-field in the world. Wild game of every description abounds in this extensive and unhealthy portion of Africa.

The Chobe was followed up to  $16^{\circ} 40''$ , south latitude, where two branches come down from the north. The Chobe is a fine river with many rapids and falls, and swarms with crocodiles and hippopotami, snakes and iguana.

The natives have many canoes and are great fishermen, using a kind of harpoon for the larger fish. The Mambo natives are very expert in this sport and lay traps for them. Bows and arrows and spears are the general weapons used, but many guns have been introduced into the country of late years. The arrows are poisoned with the seed of a plant that is a runner, very large, the petals long, flowers yellow, from which the poison is extracted.

I met with several of the Wayeiye natives on the Tonga, who hunt the hippopotamus and crocodile. When at my station on that river, opposite Nakane village, in 1867, a curious affair occurred, which shows the wonderful amount of sense and affection crocodiles possess. A little below my waggon, a native boy caught a young crocodile about a foot in length, and took it up to the huts, and put it into an old basket. About two hours afterwards, my driver called out there was a large crocodile crawling up the bank, and making for the hut where the young one was in the basket, the natives running away. On looking out of my waggon, sure enough, a large one, about eleven feet in length, was up to the basket, when my

Kaffirs ran up with rifles and shot it. The distance of the hut from the river was over 100 yards. It was impossible to say how the mother found out the whereabouts of her baby, it might have been by smell or she might have seen the boy put it into the basket. I have heard many similar statements from the natives, of the old ones following their young when taken, but put little faith in them until I absolutely saw for myself the truth of these statements. Crocodiles are also very tender over their eggs, they scratch a hole in the sand, lay about a dozen, then cover them with sand, and watch with great care until the young come forth.

The altitude of Linyanti above sea-level is 2813 feet, the same as the water-level of the Chobe, Lake N'gami, River Zouga, and the large brak vlei Makarakara, showing the perfect level of these points. This country is full of pans and vleis, dense bush, sand everywhere, not a stone to be seen in all this region. At a vlei called Sixteen Vlei, the road goes to the Victoria Falls; but with all its flatness, there is an indescribable charm in travelling through it; there are so many novel objects to take the attention of an explorer, in addition to hunting, and sometimes being hunted by the large game when stalking them in the dense bush or under lofty trees, far away from the human world. One may die and be forgotten, and no one may ever hear how. My death has been re-

ported twice, at different times, to the Governor of the Cape, once by the Rev. Mr. Thomas, of Shiloh in Matabeleland, in 1869, that I had been killed by the Makalakas, in Mashona country, my waggon destroyed, and property taken, and my friends in the Colony in duty bound were mourning my loss for several years, as I had not been down south, having trekked far in beyond any white traders, and was never heard of.

I was pursuing my work in blissful ignorance of the many tears that had been shed for the lone traveller in savage lands. When I came south, after being buried three years, calmly trekking along with my waggon, oblivious of the scare I should create amongst my friends,—so fully convinced were they that the report of my death or murder was correct, that, on presenting myself in the flesh, many of them could not for some time realize they were looking upon a mortal man. Information was forwarded to his Excellency the Governor, that I had turned up from the far interior, in sound health and strength as man could wish to be.

The other occasion was when I was in the North Kalahara Desert, away for nearly three years, over all those northern regions up to the Zambese, and in this particular region. Natives came down and reported to the missionary at Secheles, that the Karkabrio bushmen had burnt my waggon, and that myself and people had been speared. Again the report was sent

on to the Government at Cape Town, and again my second resurrection took place, much to the delight of my friends, who had given up all hope of my ever returning from a country so entirely beyond the limit of the hunter or the traveller. It is true, I have had some very narrow escapes in passing through regions where hostile tribes occupy the country; particularly in Damara and Ovampoland, and amongst the southern bushmen who once infested the Cape Colony. Fever and the perils of hunting were never thought of. To avoid the former never take unboiled water; weak cold tea, if possible, or weak brandy and water, will in a great measure prevent it, with an occasional dose of quinine. Sunstroke can also be avoided by wearing a very high-crowned, broad-brimmed felt hat, with several holes as ventilators, with a light kerchief inside the hat on the head, which cuts off the fierce rays of the sun from the brain. Though I have spent so many years under a tropical sun, exposed daily and all day long to its perpendicular rays, I have never once felt the slightest indication of sunstroke, which I attribute to the above precaution.

## CHAPTER XII.

## The Kalahara Desert.

## THE NORTHERN DIVISION IN THE ZAMBESE BASIN.

THIS region being the most extensive, and at the same time occupying the greater portion of the interior of South Central Africa, claims special attention in connection with the surrounding native tribes, all of whom claim a portion adjoining their respective territories as their exclusive hunting-ground.

In exploring an unknown country and meeting so many and such a variety of people whose languages differ, it is not easy on making their first acquaintance to grasp the different sounds that give meaning and expression to their words. I noticed this particularly with respect to the name of this desert region in connection with local names on its borders. In writing down names from native pronunciation I wrote them phonetically, using as few letters as possible.

The word Kalahara corresponds with Namaqualand, Damaraland, on the west coast, Zahara Desert on the

north, Makarakara salt vlei, Makalakara pits, Kasaka bushmen of the northern parts, and many others.

The boundary of this vast and interesting region comes down south to the Orange river 29° S. lat., which is also the northern boundary of the Cape Colony, and extends north to the 15° S. lat., the extent of my exploration. The western boundary is formed by Great Namaqua, Damara, and Ovampo lands. On the east it is bounded by the Zambese to the Victoria Falls, then due south, skirts the eastern bank of the great Makarakara salt vlei, where five streams enter it from the watershed, viz. the Nata, Quabela, Shuari, Mia, and Tua; thence the boundary runs south to the Makalaka pits, a few miles to the west of Ba-Mongwato, from these pits due south to Molapololo (but that portion of Khama's country south of Mongwato down to Sechele's) to the Limpopo may be included, on to Kanya and to Macebys Station on the Molapo down that river to Conge, Honey vlei, on to the north of Langberg range of mountains to Cowie, and down that range to the Orange river, thirty miles above Kheis.

The length from north to south, as far as I have explored, is 970 miles; but, from information obtained from the Kasaka bushmen on the spot, it may extend much further. The greatest breadth is about 500 miles from east to west, and contains within this area 280,000 square miles.





THE CUBANGO RIVER, CENTRAL AFRICA

The northern and eastern portion is within the Zambeze basin, except that part drained by the Notuane and its tributaries, which is in the Limpopo basin, all the rest and central part is in the Orange river basin.

The great watershed passes through, taking a diagonal course from the south-east corner to the north-west corner in Ovampoland. The greatest altitude above sea-level being 6100 feet, near the source of the Molapo, the lowest along the shed is 4000 feet, and in Ovampoland 3880 feet.

The river system of South Central Africa has already been described in a chapter to itself, so that the configuration of the country should be more clearly understood; but it is necessary to deal with them again to a certain extent in describing the different localities and native tribes within its boundary.

Lake N'gami is situated nearly in the centre of the desert, to which two of the most important northern rivers, Cubango and Quito, flow, uniting in one, the Tonga, which enters the lake at the north-west corner in  $20^{\circ} 25'$  S. lat.,  $24^{\circ} 45'$  E. long., at an altitude of 2813 feet above sea-level. The Cubango or Okavango river, the source of which is much farther north than my explorations extended, passes through a dense and impenetrable bush, extending on both banks far away in  $15^{\circ}$  S. lat., where there are several tributaries falling in. Following the stream, which is broad and

in many places deep, with rapids and waterfalls at different points, passing through forest and open country with native kraals situated on its left banks, occupied by various tribes who are great fishermen and have canoes, and where the hippopotami and crocodile abound, down to where the Quito enters it in  $17^{\circ} 10'$  S. lat. on to Dabele, a large native station, where the river turns south, branching off into the Chobe and Zambese. The other branch takes its course to Lake N'gami and receives the Okayanka, which rises in Ovampoland and flows east. All to the north of this river the country varies much in character, the eastern portion is low with extensive swamps covered with brush and fine timber, the western portion rises in ridges with lofty plateaux covered with rich tropical plants and trees, including the giant baobab; there are also extensive plains, with dry watercourses crossing them towards the east, many of them have separate names under the general name Omuramba.

The country to the west of the upper part of the Cubango, which is also called the Okavango, is rich in timber and fine grasses, and game of every description known in South Central Africa; this region is known as Ombango, through which a road passes to the Cubango, and to the north is the land of the Ambuelas, where the tsetse fly is very common; it is inhabited by the Kasaka and Ombango Bushmen. At the bend

of the river, at  $16^{\circ} 20'$  S. lat., the country rises in ridges towards the north considerably, causing many rapids to be formed in the stream. Below, the country is more level, until my station is reached, where there is a hill on the right of the river, with many wherfs of Bushmen, the altitude being 3370 feet above sea-level, and on the opposite side of the river are many wherfs of the Ovampo, Karakeri, Kororo, Ojego, and others, each with their separate chiefs; the most important is the Ovakuenyami.

The river contains many varieties of fish, which the natives are very expert in catching from their canoes by spearing and setting traps, as also the hippopotami and crocodile.

The large station of the Ovokangari tribe of the Ovampo the chief or king Mpachi rules; and lower down is the Ovalmji tribe, ruled over by Queen Kapongo, and opposite a dry watercourse falls in; another, Omuramba Omapu, which passes through Ovambanquida country, under an Ovampo chief, and where the Kuka Bushmen live on the bank of the Omurambo and Sheshongo, and lower down come the Ovambanquedos tribe, to the west of the chief of the Ovampo tribe, as also Chikonga, who lives on the banks, and above him the Ovampo chief Tjipangamore. To the east of the Ovokangari or Ovaquangari are various tribes, the Oyombo and Bavickos at Libebe, who deal largely in ivory, feathers, skins, and slaves

with the Portuguese traders. The Ovokangari cultivate the soil, grow corn, are good artificers, manufacture arms, picks, utensils of many kinds for their cooking, and ornaments for their women. They work in iron and copper, and sell many articles to the traders who visit them from the Portuguese settlement on the west coast, and are a superior race to those around them. North of Libebe the Amabomdi and the Bavickos tribes reach as far north as the high table-land which divides the Chobe and the Quito rivers; therefore the waters of Cubango, Quito, and their tributaries have their outlet through the Chobe to the Zambese and the large swamp which is connected with the Mababe and Chobe by the Tamienkie and other streams. At the junction of the Quito and Cubango the Oshambio tribe of Ovampos live on a large island under a chief. Down the river is Debebe, and on many islands the Bakuka, Bamalleros, Bakaa, have large kraals, and on the north the Barico Bushmen. The river at Debebe is broad and navigable. Below that kraal at the bend is the cataract Nona and several rapids, and the stream continues down to Lake N'gami under the name of Tonga, receiving in its course several watercourses, under the names of Omaramba, Ovampa, Okayanka, She-shonga, and others.

This extensive region in many parts along the watercourses is thickly populated, and game abounds,

cotton is indigenous, and valuable products of various kinds. A great trade could be carried on if a proper system of communication were opened up through Walfish Bay, Lake N'gami, and down the broad and fine river Chobe to the English traders at all these places, and a great market found for British merchandize. The natives are well disposed and quite alive to the advantages of trade ; they are a well-made, strong people. I was told at Lebebe that much further north there were people of a yellowish-white colour, and also a savage tribe who are nomadic. I believe the former is a remnant of the white race that once occupied the country on the south side of the lower Zambese who have left so many of their works behind them, and maybe a portion of this white race followed the river up and became mixed with the native tribes. There are also many scattered tribes living amongst these tribes between the Tonga river and Ovampoland, the Masara, Kaikaibio, Makololo, Papero, Ohiaongo, Majambi, and others. The Bakalahara Bushmen were once a powerful tribe who it appears gave the name to this desert. The lion, leopard, panther, and wolves are met with daily. The leopard and panther are more to be feared than the lion when in the thick jungle after game, their form of attack is so cat-like in approaching their prey, taking advantage of every cover until the final spring is made. The many lagoons and swamps seem to be their favourite hunting-

ground. In all the waters of these rivers fish abound, of many varieties. Crocodiles, hippopotami, iguanos, otters and snakes are plentiful everywhere along the streams. Unfortunately this region is very unhealthy. The sickly season lasts from September to May; the other months of the year it is very healthy. The malaria from the standing pools in the hot dry season causes fever, which is very difficult to get rid of.

Down the Tonga the natives build their huts in these island homes for safety; they are circular mud huts with high thatched roofs; they are similar to those on the Upper Cubango, and they hunt the hippopotami. On the lower part of the Quito I shot one in the head, as he was poking his nose out of the water. The skin we use for several purposes, mostly for sjamboks. Large snakes seem to swarm in every part, particularly the python. In a small stream where I thought to be free from crocodiles, I took a daily bath during my stay at my station. On one occasion I was enjoying a swim at the foot of a small fall of beautiful clear water; hearing a great splashing behind me, I turned and saw an enormous snake passing me at great speed, lashing the water into my face, and a few seconds after he was lost in the tall reeds below. Expecting one or two more might follow, I was soon standing on the bank; but before I could dress, down came four others, large, and three small ones, and passed into the reeds below.

The largest appeared to be twenty feet in length, and very large round the body ; their skin was dark brown with dirty yellow marks. I knew them at once to be the python. A few days after I shot one that measured eighteen feet three inches in length, and three feet round the body, and three feet from the tail a large hook was fixed. I had a similar adventure some time before in Bechuanaland with one which measured sixteen feet two inches, and inside was a steinbok. At night they make a great noise.

Every kind of game is found here. Elephants may be seen in hundreds ; four kinds of rhinoceros : the black borcli, with two horns of equal size ; another black with one large and one small horn ; a white with two ; and another white with one long horn, which is the most rare ; their native name is Chikooroo. I made a knobkerry out of the horn, which measured two feet eleven inches, from one I shot the previous year. Buffaloes, giraffe, blaawbok, elands, gnu, hartebeest, sassaybe, gemsbok, koodoos, pallah, and others ; also wild boar which grow to a great size, wild dogs and a host of smaller animals. The ostrich may be seen on the plains in troops of hundreds ; but as guns are now becoming more common with the natives, they will soon be thinned out. There are also many beautiful blue cranes, secretary-birds, mayhens, and legions of ducks, geese, and beautiful small birds, monkeys, and baboons everywhere, mostly in the fine

trees along the river-banks, and they are much hunted by the leopards and panthers.

On returning to my camp one evening I had a very narrow escape from one of the former ; walking along under the trees on the shore of the Cubango, I saw immediately over my head one of these leopards on the branch of the tree that overhung the river, not twenty feet from me. It was the act of a moment ; I up with my rifle and fired at his chest, when down he fell a few paces from me ; he seemed to be in the act of springing upon me—another second and I should have been too late. This makes the fourth leopard I have shot in this part. On all occasions I had narrow escapes. In a country like this, where in every turn in the thick bush we meet with one or other of these animals, we have to keep a good look-out and make our rifles our constant companions.

Next week will be Christmas—the height of summer. Thermometer in the shade, under the trees,  $107^{\circ}$  ; but I do not think the heat so oppressive as it is down in the colony, for the simple reason that we have a dense bush, magnificent trees, and long grass that absorbs the heat of the sun's rays and keeps the earth much cooler by being in shade. In the colony it is open ; no trees, scanty grass, and an immense open rocky country, so that the stones become so hot that they destroy the boots. I have frequently made my tea by placing the kettle with water on a stone for half an





NORTH KALAHARA DESERT CENTRAL AFRICA

hour ; then put in the tea, let it stand a few minutes, and it is as strong and hot as can be wished.

Most of the natives have been very quiet, but some of the Ovampo have been very troublesome, which has shortened my stay in this part, more particularly amongst the wherfs of the Ovokangari. My Bakuku and Batuana guides were invaluable and took me through without loss. Being the rainy season, water was plentiful, but I had great difficulty in crossing many of the watercourses, impeded by thick belts of jungle, although extensive tracts of country are very beautiful and park-like, lovely clumps of trees were so grouped that art could not improve them. Travelling for days without meeting with any native, on several occasions I was closely beset by lions, which my guide stated were the man-eating lions. Almost daily, thunderstorms came up in the afternoon, many of them terrific in violence ; the sunsets also are beyond description for brilliancy of colour. The early morning is generally cloudless ; clouds seldom gather before midday in summer, but in the winter months they are not visible ; this is the healthy season.

There are several roads from Lake N'gami crossing this desert to Damara, Ovampo, and on to Lebebe, and the other villages on the Cubango. Every day we went out to hunt up the game to supply the people with food, which I omit to describe as it becomes monotonous.

Very few inhabitants are scattered over this part of the desert, few hills are to be seen, until we arrive at Lake N'gami, when the Lubalo, Makkapola and Makabana hills come into view, and it is round the lake that the people under the chief Molemo live, and at his kraal and others along the river-banks of the Zouga or Bot-let-le. The people are composed of Betuana, Barutsie, Makolo, Bushmen, and several mixed races; each tribe has a petty chief ruling over them, but all subject to the chief Molemo as far as his territory east goes, where the chief Khama joins. The principal villages are Sebubumpie, Mokhokhotlo, Mamakahuie, Mozelenza, Samaai, and numerous others occupied by Bushmen.

The produce of the northern district is collected by the Ovampo traders and brought down to the Walfish Bay, and by Portuguese traders from the Portuguese settlement at Benguela. The trade of Lake N'gami and the Zambese region is carried on by English traders from the Cape colony, having communication by roads from Bamangwato, the chief Khama's station, and roads from the lake to Walfish Bay, passing the Ghanze chalkpits, situated on the watershed, where permanent water is obtained. Many thousand Bushmen live in the more unfrequented parts of the desert, having no settled abode, but remove from water to water as it becomes scarce; there are three separate tribes, the Masara, Kasaka, and Kaikaibrio, and also some Ma-

kalakars. The greater portion of this part of the Kalahara within the Zambese basin is limestone, covered in places with deep sand, but vegetation is very luxuriant—splendid grasses, and magnificent timber.

It is a good corn-growing country, a variety of valuable herbs come to great perfection, every kind of European plants and fruits thrive; water can be obtained by digging,—a splendid country for immigration.

THE SOUTHERN AND WESTERN PORTION OF THE KALAHARA, WITHIN THE ORANGE RIVER BASIN, THE WATERS OF WHICH FALL INTO THE SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN.

The Orange river is the only outlet to the sea to convey the water brought down by the ancient river system that drains the south, the central, and the western divisions of this extensive and important portion of the Kalahara Desert. The Orange for 250 miles forms the southern boundary. The rivers that drain the north-western and the central part of the Kalahara, are the twin streams Nosop and Oup, appropriately called twins, as the two join for twenty miles and again separate, both running parallel to each other within a short distance, entering the Molapo close to the great bend, where that river takes the

name Hygap, and flows south, and enters the Orange at Kakaman's drift. The Nosop rises in the Waterberg of Damaraland in two head-waters called the Black and White Nosop, which unite north of Westly Vale and join the Oup at Narukus. The Oup rises in Damaraland in lat.  $22^{\circ}$ , under the name Elephant river, and gathering the waters of other small branches, joins the Nosop at Narukus for twenty miles, then becomes an independent stream and, as I have stated, falls into the Molapo. Several shallow water-courses traverse the desert, but are not of sufficient importance to merit a description. The other river connected with the above system is the Molapo, which rises on the west slope of the central watershed at an altitude of 5350 feet, in  $26^{\circ} 5'$  S. lat.,  $26^{\circ} 25'$  E. long., where a plentiful supply of pure water flows throughout the year, and takes a westerly course to the great bend in lat.  $25^{\circ} 50'$  E., long.  $21^{\circ} 16'$ , when it takes the name Hygap, as already stated, receiving in its course the small streams Moretsane and Sitolakooly. The Kuruman river rises in the south of the Kuruman mission-station, and with its small tributaries flows west and enters the Hygap below the great bend. The Back river commences in a range of the Brinus mountains, a beautiful and picturesque group, several thousand feet in height, of granite formation, well wooded in the kloofs and ravines. The peculiar

feature of the river is that it has two outlets, one to the east into the Hygap, the other to the west into the Great Fish river. South of this river three mountain streams drain the southern Kalahara, viz. the Nisbit, Aamo, and Keikab, which fall into the Orange to the west of the Hygap. The Great Fish river, which completes the river system of the Kalahara in the Orange river basin, rises in the Awas mountain in Damaraland,  $22^{\circ} 40'$  S. lat.,  $17^{\circ} 30'$  E. long., at an altitude of 6400 feet, and flows south for 430 miles, and enters the Orange river ninety miles from its mouth. The country through which it flows is very dry from the scarcity of rain. There are no important streams in the east, but on the west there are many tributaries that drain the high mountain country. The Chun rises in the Mitchell mountains, on the border of Great Namaqualand, receiving the Kurick branch, passing through a beautiful and wild country to the south of Nababis station. The three small tributaries of the Great Fish river to the north of the Chun in  $22^{\circ} 32'$  S. lat. are the Ganap, near Rehoboth station ; the Houra and Manabis ; south of the Chun are the Huntop, Koros, and the Amhup, all receiving their water from the high lands of Great Namaqualand. The principal stations on these rivers are the Amhup, Bethany, Kachasa, Kawais, Reems, Hudenaap, Brak-hout, and a few others of recent date.

The inhabitants are of various tribes, called the Namaquas, Veld-Scoondrawers, Bundelswaarts, Hottentots, Korannas, Kaffirs, Gobabies, and Bushmen; some of the former cultivate the soil, use ploughs and keep cattle and sheep; they live near the small fountains and along the river-banks, where they procure water by digging and permanent pits. They live under petty captains. There are several mission-stations. Copper is found in many parts of the country, and copper-mines are worked in the south near the Orange river. The geological formation is granite gneiss, trap, and amygdaloid. From the magnitude of this river, it is evident the country at one time must have been well supplied with rain, as it is a deep, broad, and stony stream, showing how rapid must have been the flow of water down it. Fine timber and bush grow in the kloofs and along the banks; many of the hills are very picturesque, and the country produces fine grasses for cattle.

The trade of the country is greatly improving and is supplied by colonial traders from Port Nolloth on the west coast in Little Namaqualand, which is in the Cape colony; a railway from that port to the copper-mines on the Orange river has been for many years at work. In the Kalahara Desert on the east of the Great Fish river, and the southern portion up to the Hygap river and south of the Brinus mountain

and Back river, are many stations and kraals. Nisbet or Barth is the most important, where many Griquas are settled, also at Nabos, Luris, Akuris, Blydver-Wagh, Aamis, Oribane, Ariam, and many others. The Griquas cultivate the ground, and keep large herds of cattle and sheep, and trade largely with the Cape colony. Hottentots, Korannas, Bushmen, Kaffirs, Namaquas, and small communities of other tribes live on the banks of the Orange and along the streams, with their cattle-posts, which of late years has greatly added to their wealth and enabled the people to trade largely with the colony.

The bold outline of the lofty hills with their thickly-wooded slopes and kloofs add greatly to the beauty of the landscape, more particularly along the Orange river, where the rich vegetation, fine timber and bush, forming deep belts on both sides; the rugged and perpendicular rocks of many colours, which form its banks clothed with lovely creepers hanging down in festoons with their scarlet pods, make the river scenery very beautiful, and to add to its charm the dense bush swarms with the grey monkey, baboons, and every variety of the cat tribe, even to the lion, pheasants, partridges, guinea-fowl, legions of snipes, ducks, geese, moor-hen, plovers, eagles, vultures, and a variety of hawks, some of them of great size, measuring from tip to tip eight feet; also the

heron, crane, and stork, and a variety of others, in addition to the smaller tribes of birds with brilliant plumage.

The otter is also very plentiful, the banks being covered with their spoor, also the porcupine. There are a great many islands, many of them large and thickly wooded, and about 300 miles up the stream the beautiful and picturesque waterfall, the Aukrabies, which has a fall of over ninety feet, is a grand sight when the flood-waters come down in their annual flow, rising above their ordinary level from twenty-five to thirty feet, bringing down large trees that go rolling and crashing as they are carried along by the rushing water.

I was outspanned on the north bank of this river in 1871, with two waggons and a cart, for the purpose of making a new tent to one of the waggons that had capsized and rolled over into a sluit a few days previously, and had sent the oxen, forty-eight, on to a neighbouring island to graze early in the morning, when the Griqua chief, living at his kraal not far from my camp, came and informed me the river was coming down. The herds were sent over immediately to bring them off, but before they could do so, the river had risen fifteen feet, consequently the oxen had to swim, passing down mid-stream with a small portion of their heads and horns only visible, the two herds swimming behind with blocks of wood

under their arms, and they were carried down a mile and a half before they were able to land, and in less than two hours this river had risen thirty feet.

There are many beautiful stones and pebbles in the river-bed, agate, soap-stone, petrified gum and wood, which I have found of white, brown, black, and red. Diamonds also are found occasionally mixed up in the gravel that has been brought down by heavy floods.

On the north of the Back river and Brinus mountains, the country is more open, extensive grass plains and other portions well wooded. At Liefdotes, Tobas, and Klopper vlei are large kraals, also at Swart and Hoab, on the north of the Brinus. Up along the east side of the Great Fish river to the Oup, the country is very pretty, splendid grasses and timber, the hills are well wooded, in some places to their summits. Game abounds, ostriches I have seen in troops of 200.

Two hundred miles north of the Orange river and fifty miles west of the Hygap, in  $25^{\circ} 50' S.$  lat.,  $20^{\circ} 42' E.$  long., is Hogskin, a large vlei, thirty-three miles in length, and in some parts three miles in width, the greater portion is dry for nine months of the year. The road crosses it to the Griqua settlement at Meer, which is twenty miles to the north, where there are extensive vleis, 2710 feet above sea-level.

Three rivers flow into the Hogskin vlei, viz. the

Snake, the Moi, and the Knaas. After heavy rains the vlei is full, and forms a fine sheet of water, which it retains for some months; wild fowl and game frequent it at that time. These rivers rise in a hilly country; the Knaas is the largest, and retains water in portions of its bed through the year. Quassam, a large Bushman kraal, is situated on its banks; these Bushmen are distinct from the Bushmen of the Desert; they were, many years ago, driven from the Cape colony, by Sir Walter Currie, on account of their stealing the cattle, and robbing travellers. They first took refuge in the many islands in the Orange river, but were driven out and went north, where they settled at Quassam, and where I nearly lost all my waggons, oxen, and everything, being kept there for two days, and the oxen without grass. Coche Africanda was their captain, and I escaped only by threatening that if he or any of his men moved to detain me whilst I inspanned, I would shoot him dead, holding my rifle ready for action. There were nearly 100 well armed with guns; seeing my determination, they remained passive, and I left.

Eight miles below this kraal is a very pretty spot, a valley surrounded by sandhills, with limestone between and a spring of water, where several roads meet going to Damara and Ovampo, Lake N'gami, Namaqualand and the colony. The valley is about a mile in

length, and half a mile in breadth, studded with very fine kameel-doorn trees. The sand in these rivers contains very fine particles of copper, and also garnet dust. On the south side of Hogskin vlei are two conical hills, which are very prominent objects, visible sixty miles off, and as they stand alone, surrounded by bush and the vleis, they add greatly to the beauty of the landscape. The highest is 415 feet from the base, the other measures 394 feet; they are called base kopt. A few miles south-west of them I procured several specimens of coal, which cropped out in a large sluit, and also from the side of a hill, and twenty miles beyond. Slate and shale form the beds of the rivers Snake and Moi.

Near Knaas river the formation in the valley is a conglomerate of limestone, greenstone, and garnets. This part of the desert is full of bush, kameel-doorns, mimosa, and other trees, and is diversified by long low ridges of sandstone, limestone, and many low hills of granite. During the rainy season vegetation is splendid, and the grass fine and beautiful, consequently game is abundant; it follows as a natural consequence that lions, leopards, and many other species of feline animals are numerous. This is truly the lion veldt; I have counted at one time in a troop, great and small, twenty-two, frequently six and seven in the middle of the day, and within a short distance from my waggons. The ostrich is becoming more scarce every day;

when I first visited this country, in 1864, the Bushman would exchange a beautiful blood or prime white feather for a piece of tobacco worth sixpence, and less; now they are difficult to be found.

This desert has been considered a barren and uninteresting region, but it is not so. There are portions, it is true, that cannot be traversed during the dry season, several who have attempted to penetrate it having been obliged to come out and leave their waggons, their oxen all lost for want of water. But this was in a great measure their own fault, for if they had followed up the rivers and dug in their beds they would have obtained it.

There are many miles of limestone flats, some extending ten miles in length, bounded by extensive sand-dunes, and isolated koppies, with their pointed summits covered with bush. These sand-dunes cover an immense area, extending from east to west fifty miles, and thirty miles over, and in altitude from fifty to 200 feet. Their base is a dark limestone covered with sand, which varies in thickness from four to ten feet. Their sides are at an angle of about  $30^{\circ}$ , and the topmost ridges so pointed that when a waggon and span of eighteen oxen arrive towards their tops, the whole span is descending on the other side as the waggon reaches the summit, and the driver on the box can only see the four after oxen; but from the great

depth of sand in the road the waggon glides down with ease. To illustrate more clearly the shape of these dunes I can only compare them to a very stormy sea, with gigantic waves instantly turned into sand ; many small trees and bushes grow on their slopes, and also beautiful grasses. From six to eight miles a day with an ox-waggon is considered a good trek. There are some small fountains and vleis in some of the hollows, otherwise no one could pass that way, as the road over these dunes from first entering them is thirty miles, then a flat of eight miles over limestone and sand-dunes again. There are also many isolated conical granite hills, that rise from the level plains to an altitude of 200 feet, formed of huge blocks ; they more resemble artificial than natural monuments ; many of them are so overgrown with trees and bush that grow between the blocks that scarcely any of the rock is to be seen. It is dangerous to inspect them too closely, as they are the lurking-places of lions, leopards, and other beasts of prey.

I discovered this on ascending one of them at Kanardas : when nearly half-way up, on looking into one of the small caverns, of which there are many, I saw at the end two large bright eyes glaring at me from the dark. After exchanging a good stare at each other I quietly took my departure down : knowing the nature of these animals, that they will not openly follow or attack, if not disturbed, I felt pretty safe. As

to the nature of the beast I cannot say, but from the great size of the bright red eyes I concluded he was a lion,—at any rate, their expression did not appear very amiable. A few lessons like this make an explorer cautious before prying too closely into hidden and secluded spots in a wild country like this desert.

On the east of Hogskein vlei is a large salt-pan or vlei, twelve miles in length from north to south and two broad. It is worked only by the Griquas living at Meer. This settlement was established in 1870. I was told by an old Bushman, that they took the bush children and made them work, and would not give them back. In 1871 Meer had become quite a tidy village, of about twenty-five houses, some of them built of red brick. The chief was Dirk Falander, who held a magistrate's court and tried prisoners ; it is a little republic upon a small scale, not more than 100 all told, except the Bushmen slaves. There are close to the village two large ponds or pans ; the banks on their sides are seventy feet in height. The country round is open grass veldt. Between Meer and Hog-skin vlei is a large pan, surrounded by high sand-rocks, called Klein Meer, a very pretty and picturesque lake, two miles in length, with fine bushes and grass lining the banks ; five months of the year it is dry. Sand-dunes are round it in every direction.

There is a considerable traffic and trade carried on by the Griquas and the Cape colony. Roads cross the

Orange river at Koran drift, Kakaman's drift, and Orlean drift; the two latter meet at Kanardus, close to extensive lime-pits, where water is obtained, by the side of a dry river-bed, where there are some of the prettiest trees I have seen in Africa, spread over the veldt, park-like, and dense bush between lofty granite hills, which in consequence of water is the general outspanning place. I came here one evening after dark and nearly lost many of my trek oxen, in their eagerness to get at the water, which is twenty feet from the surface. They were supplied by sending my boys down with buckets, by that means filling a hole dug out for the oxen to drink.

These pits are fifty miles north of Kakaman's drift, and twenty-five miles on is Swaat Modder, in the bed of the Hygap river, the road passing along its bed between sand-cliffs 150 feet in height. Between these two watering-places the Back river enters the Hygap; the sand in its bed is mostly composed of ruby sand, which I believe would make a fine red glass.

At Swaat Modder the right side of the river has cliffs 100 feet in height; the left bank has sand-dunes, where I found several flint borers, many of them in a finished state, for making holes in the shell of the ostrich-egg to form beads. Under these cliffs, in an old Bushman cave, I built a stone house, where we remained six weeks waiting for the rains. All this country is under the Koranna chief

Puffadder, and his people are spread over the country in small kraals. The road still continues north, past other pits in limestone at Bloemfontein, and at Kebeum, springbok, &c. ; Abequas pits, a large Koranna kraal; then passes over sand-dunes for thirty miles, and arrives at Anaerogas, where there is another Kaffir station, also a store kept by a Mr. Redman, of whom I bought some tobacco for five bags of gunpowder, and a medicine-chest, and a variety of goods I was much in want of. A captain of the Bundelswaarts is here, to give notice to the Bastards to clear out. Coal abounds in this part, garnets are found in all the river-beds, and in many parts mixed up in the sand of the desert. Lions are so plentiful here that it is dangerous to leave the waggon without your rifle. A Koranna man was killed and eaten last night, a short distance from the waggon. This station is 180 miles north from Kakaman's drift, on the Orange river, and three miles south of Hogskin vlei; here the roads divide, one goes to the salt-pan, another to Meer station, a third to Quassam on to Damaraland, a fourth past Knaas, in a N.N.W. direction to Ovampoland, and a fifth turns S.W., and leads to Barth, where the Bundelswaarts people live, besides others to different parts of the desert.

The other portion of the Kalahara takes in the southern part from the Orange river to the Molapo river, 190 miles to the north, and from the Hygap

river to the Langberg range of mountains, which is the eastern boundary of the desert, 100 miles in width. The lower portion, near the Orange river, is better adapted for farming, as there is good grass, and the karroo bush, upon which sheep and bucks get fat. I purchased of Klass Lucas, the chief, living at his large kraal on the banks of the Orange, near Orleans drift, a large Africander sheep, for 2 lbs. of gunpowder. It weighed, without the tail, 62 lbs., and the tail produced 12 lbs. of pure fat.

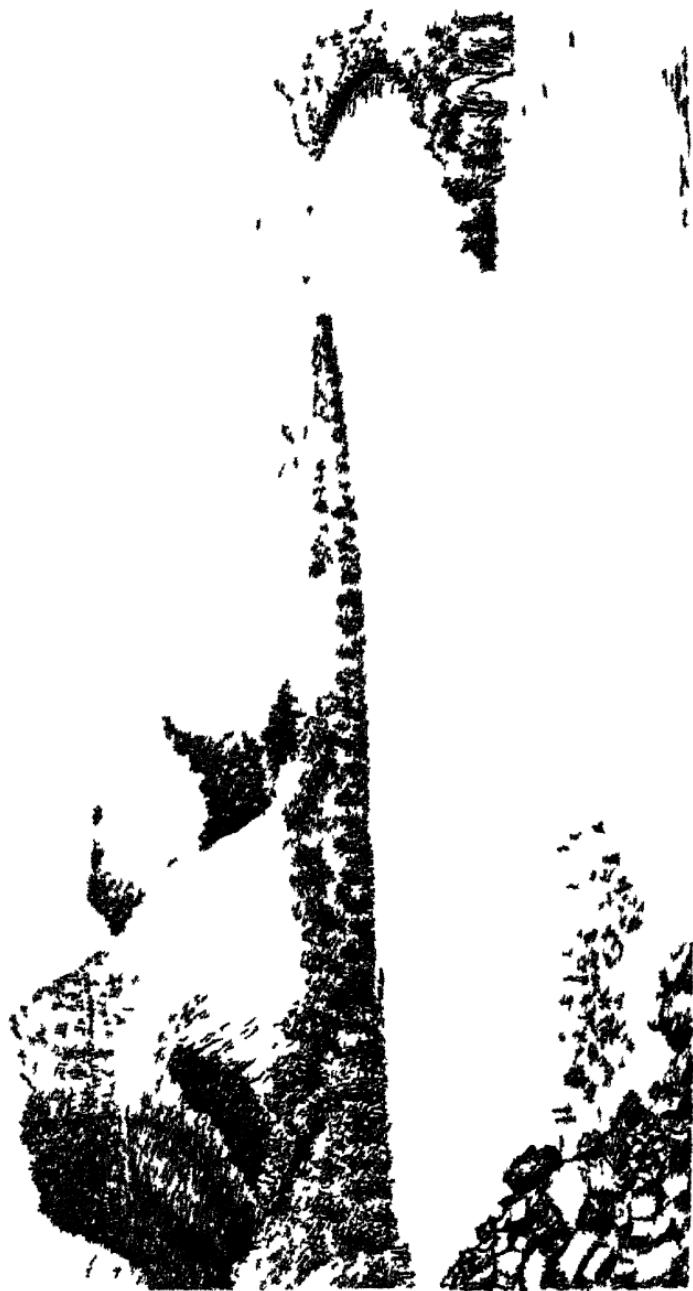
Between this station and sixty miles to the north, called Blue Busk Kalk, there is a fine fountain and large vlei, with a stone koppie on the north side, where the rocks stand out in grotesque forms of granite formation; there are in the intermediate distance several very peculiar granite koptjies; they average about 200 feet in height and 600 feet in circumference at the base, large masses of huge rocks, piled one upon another, and without any vegetation; the country round is perfectly level; they have the appearance of ruined pyramids; the highest I measured was 275 feet.

The mountain, called Scheurberg, is another peculiar range, with its many pointed peaks, with wood in the valleys and kloof; fifty miles in length and twelve in width, a road passing through the centre, a great resort of lions, wolves, and other beasts of prey. The continuation of the Orange river up from the junction

of the Hygap is particularly picturesque, and in many places fearfully bold and rugged, with lofty and almost perpendicular cliffs, with fine timber, beautiful bushes, tree-ferns, and other subtropical plants, which add much to the landscape.

It was at the point of the Langberg, close to the river, where the berg seems split up into several magnificent hills, between which and the river is almost a level but thickly wooded space of several hundred yards in width, where we came to outspan, for the purpose of making a new tent to my waggon. My driver happened to capsize it into a sluit two days before, and, to complete my misfortune, I lost four of my best trek-oxen in the river by sinking in the mud. The next day one died of the melt sickness, and I had to shoot another from lung sickness.

The willow-trees along the bank gave us plenty of wood, and in two days the tent was completed. Mr. Staple, who was with me, suggested we should make a boat of wicker-work, after our Welsh coracles, which we soon completed, by small branches being bent the proper shape, with cross-pieces, each tied very carefully together, forming a strong and firm framework, over which we stretched two raw bullock-hides, well sewn together, and when dry painted it red,—two seats, two paddles, a mast, and lug-sail; the length was seven feet, and twenty inches deep, in shape like half an egg cut through length-



THE ORANGE RIVER BELOW KHEIS 1864



ways. This little work occupied us a week. When perfectly dry we took it down to the river to launch it, not thinking of its lightness. As soon as it was floated I brought it close to the rock, and put one foot into the boat, and then made a spring in, when I was no sooner in than I was out on the other side into the water, a regular header—fortunately it was deep water. However, on landing, I took off my clothes to dry on the rocks, and Staples got some Koranna girls who were sitting on the bank watching our work, to bring stones to put in as ballast, which took some time, as few were to be found.

I was better prepared for the second trial, being without clothes, but this time our boat was perfectly steady, and no wonder, for we had at least 200 lbs. of stones in the bottom as ballast. A fine breeze was blowing up river, which was nearly a mile wide: fixing our little mast and lug, we started on our first voyage, steering by a paddle. This being the first boat that ever floated on the Orange river, I consider it worthy of recording. Our little craft acted splendidly. The astonishment of the Bushmen, Korannas, and the blood Kaffirs living on the bank, who came down to see the white man's floating-house, was amusing; they shouted with delight as we sailed away up stream; the women in particular were the loudest in their admiration. After spending some hours sailing up and down, exploring on the islands, shooting ducks and geese, we

returned to our landing and carried our boat to camp, after taking out the ballast. As we were in a lovely spot, well sheltered by trees, and only a short distance from several small kraals, where we could obtain milk, we determined to remain some time to explore the neighbourhood, shoot and fish, and enjoy this wild, independent, and delightful free and easy life.

There were several families of blood Kaffirs who had permanently established themselves on the banks of this river. They originally came from the Cape Colony ; the men were perfectly naked, and the women also, with the exception of a piece of skin round the loins, which was of very little service as a covering ; the Korannas and Bushmen the same. In the evening we had two fires, one for us and one for our boys, having two waggons, a cart, and many oxen and sheep, to look after. We had eight servants, composed of Hottentots, Korannas, Bushmen, and a Cape half-cast ; consequently, when we were all assembled round the fires, with the addition of our neighbours, who never failed to visit us at feeding-time to come in for snacks, we formed a large gathering of as romantic and unique a party as could well be collected at any picnic. The ladies present were of all colours, from yellow to black ; many of them well-formed and good-looking, others were of every type of ugliness.

The Kaffirs were models of symmetry, and a much superior class to the others. Having an un-

limited supply of wood, our fires lighted up the trees, bush, and many of the near rocks, leaving the lofty mountains in shadow, looking black and grim against the sky,—a grand picture for a Turner. I made an attempt to portray it on canvas, but my humble efforts could not do justice to this beautiful and wild scene.

So enjoyable was this mode of life, what with sketching, exploring, fishing, and shooting, besides the daily sail on the river, visiting the islands, and the opposite shore, geologizing and reading under the overhanging trees as the boat floated quietly with the gentle current, I determined to waste three or four months on its banks, as I was following the river down for 300 miles, which would occupy that time to thoroughly enjoy it, and give me ample opportunity of indulging in this wild and free life. The boat was fastened on to the back of my waggon, when trekking down by the river. When outspanned, it was taken down to the water, sometimes crossing over to the Colony side to visit the blood Kaffirs, to obtain milk and purchase the large Africander sheep. The people would come down to see where we came from, and when they saw the boat and us getting into it and paddling away with our two sheep, their shouts of astonishment were amusing.

When travelling, it was always in the morning for a couple of hours ; that was our day's work, the rest being

employed in various ways as described. At one outspan, close to a small Koranna village, we as usual took the boat down to the river that we might, in midstream, enjoy our daily swim, and crossed over to some Kaffirs. They were entirely naked, nothing whatever to cover them; the women brought us some thick milk. They had heard that some white men were coming down, and told us that the Korannas intended to stop us, and not allow us to proceed. On returning to the waggons, we found several of those people sitting round our fires, evidently come to overhaul us, but they were very civil; they had been getting out what information they could from our boys.

Forewarned is being forearmed; we looked up our rifles and ammunition, to be ready for any surprise, as we intended to fight our way down stream if opposed. But there was no sign of opposition on their part. They were much amused at a sketch I had been making of them as they were sitting round the fire in their half-naked state. They each wanted me to take them individually. Many I did, for practice, and to embellish my journal, for we do not meet with such picturesque groups every day. I therefore made the best use of my opportunity. Both sexes are great swimmers, and would follow me some distance. As I sailed from the shore, I took one or two out occasionally for a sail in the boat and to help me in fishing and other work, when my own people

were out hunting up game to keep my larder full. So that, from being shy at first, they became almost too friendly, which, under existing circumstances, I permitted. Their primitive mode of living is very simple. They marry at twelve years of age, if living together as long as it suits them is called marriage. No divorce-courts are needed in these parts, everything is very primitive.

Our next trek was to avoid the high mountain which terminated on the river bank in enormous cliffs. We therefore had to go round through the gorges and over steep and stony hills—no roads in this wild country—and outspanned for the night close to a mountain stream surrounded by lofty hills, covered with bush. As night advanced, the different wild animals began to move about, the red cat, a kind of panther, the wolf-jackals, and porcupine were very plentiful. At night when the camp fires have burnt nearly out, and all the boys are rolled up in their blankets fast asleep, every sound is distinctly heard. The mountains contained many leopards, and they are very dangerous and will not hesitate to attack if you are alone.

These hills were the home of the wild Bushmen, who war on all living things. They differ from other Bushmen; they are of a reddish-black colour, and stand four feet four inches in height. They live in the caves amongst most inaccessible parts of these mountains.

They use the bow and arrow. Few are now left, as far as we know, for they never show themselves, and keep as much away from mankind as the beast of the forest.

Travelling on through mountain passes, we arrived at a native station where the chief, Klas Lucas, lived, who claimed all the country north, to the Kuruman river, which is a wild district, having several isolated hills, and being scarce of water, particularly towards the Kuruman and Molapo rivers. Large pans are distributed over this waste, but water is seldom found in them, except in the rainy season, from January to May. Large herds of game, and also the ostrich, are occasionally to be seen, but are difficult to approach, as they are constantly being hunted by the Korannas, Bushmen, Griquas, living at the kraals near the Hygap and Orange rivers, and along the mountains of Scheurberg. Limestone and granite are the only rocks to be found over this extensive region.

The Kalahara, to the north of the Molapo, up to a short distance of Lake N'gami, the Langberg range of mountains continues northwards in broken and detached hills through a wild country, unfrequented, except by native hunters, who visit it from the Bechuana side on the east, and those living in the desert and the Bastards at Meer. The ostrich is less hunted here, and consequently more plentiful. Lions seem to have it all their own way, for they are more numerous here than in any part I have seen; not only

at night, but in broad day, they make an attack on your oxen. One full-grown male lion seized one of my black oxen, not 300 yards from the waggon, in some low bush at midday. Our attention was called to the bellowing of the ox and the rush of the others towards us. The lion was on the ox, having seized him by the back of the neck; one hind-foot of the lion had torn open the flank, and the other across the back, when the ox dropped. In a few minutes I was at his side with my double-barrel rifle, and sent two bullets into his heart, when he rolled on the ground quite dead. The ox had to be shot also, for his bowels were protruding from his side; he was one of my best oxen. We saw several others a short distance off, but they disappeared after a few shots were fired at them. As we trekked over the veldt, we saw several remains of game and their horns on the ground, which the lions had killed and eaten.

There are many beautiful plants and flowers in these parts. We were frequently crossed by border tribes who go in to hunt, but they do not remain. They may be seen occasionally in small parties traversing the desert, with one or two pack-oxen loaded with dried game and such feathers as they may have obtained by the rifle or stolen from the Bushmen they may have surprised. If they catch a Bushman, they conclude he has feathers,—if not with him, he has them hid in the sand. They take from him what he has,

and then, to make him give up what they believe he has concealed, they torture the poor wretch by putting a finger or a toe in the fire until the pain is so great he tells where he has hidden them. If he has none, they believe he is telling them false, and go to such extremes, that they will burn the hand or foot until they are consumed, believing the victim is obstinate and will not tell where they are.

I have a Bushman I engaged to look after the waggon with one foot entirely burnt off, and a Bush boy with four fingers of the right hand served in the same way. The man came to me and asked to be employed, and said he would show me the waters. He brought his two daughters with him, their mother was dead. The girls' ages, as well as I could guess, were fourteen and sixteen. I employed them on various duties about the waggons, and found them very willing to learn. I had now a large family to provide for, my own two boys and seventeen Bushmen, including six women and girls, which was a great help, as they took me to watering-places unknown to hunters, and were my guides to places I should not otherwise have visited. I found if you treat these people well, they are willing to assist in any way. They are a very small race, seldom exceeding four feet ten inches in height. When old, which is at the age of forty, they are very ugly. Their food consists of game, which they kill with their bows and arrows, eggs, roots, mice, locusts,

insects, frogs, land-turtle, and anything they may pick up.

When I was in the desert in 1872, I had one of the chief Bushman captains engaged with many of his people to hunt for me. Hearing of the atrocities committed on these Bushmen by the border tribes, I told him to collect a few of the injured ones, and bring them to my waggon, that I might see them. In a week he collected fourteen, all, more or less, having lost a hand or fingers, a foot or a greater part of it. One Bushman had a red-hot iron ramrod forced through his body under the armpit and it came out on the other side. I saw the skeleton a few days after it occurred. Some are shot down, and the children stolen and taken for slaves. They are also tied to stakes and burnt to death, and I was taken to the places where these crimes had been committed and saw the remains and the site of the fire. Having satisfied myself as to the correctness of all these statements from personal inspection and from more than fifty Bushmen who told me of others equally horrible, all of which I noted in my journal, I was frequently importuned by these people to become their chief, which I declined. I was then asked to write to the Great Mother (the Queen) to solicit her Majesty's protection, and take them over as her children. This I saw, was impracticable. I then told the chief headmen to call all the Bushman families together near

at hand, at a drift where I had had the bad luck to get my waggon capsized, and where there was plenty of water, and to meet me there at the full moon a fortnight hence.

True to the appointment seventy-seven of the head-men and their families were there, forming a large camp, and as quiet and orderly as any assemblage of people could be. I took down the probable number there would be within a radius of seventy miles, from Klasson, the chief spokesman, which numbered 3986.

They stated, if the Great Mother could not be written to, would I write to the Great Chief at the Cape? This I agreed to, and told them I would write out a petition which they would sign, and I would forward it with a letter explaining the circumstances under which it was sent to his Excellency Sir Henry Barkly, detailing the atrocities, and praying to be taken under English protection, which was in due course forwarded, and some months afterwards I received a reply from his Excellency stating "he had received the petition and my letter, but as the Kalahara Desert was so far removed from the Cape Colony, he could not see how it could be done at present, but at some future time it might be considered." And from that time these peacefully-disposed people have been left to the tender mercy of the border tribes. His Excellency, it appears, did not know that the Kalahara Desert joined the northern border of the Cape Colony, which shows how little

interest was taken to ascertain the true position of the country from which the petition was forwarded.

The country to the west of this region up to Damaland, 200 miles, up to the mountain regions of that country and Great Namaqualand, is undulating, with vast stretches of wood and open plains; isolated hills of granite and limestone in other portions. One extensive district was covered with water-worn pebbles, garnets, agates, and other beautiful stones, also large broken pieces of stone of a rich crimson colour. When broken small cubes of iron pyrites like gold are embedded. The grain is very fine, and it would make splendid vases, cups, plates, or any other ornaments.

I had been foolish enough to collect specimens of every kind of stone, until my waggon became so full and heavy that I had to throw them away. I made a collection of 3000 agates of every variety of colour and shape, which had to be abandoned. Many cairns or graves are seen with heavy stones surrounding them.

Not far from them are several ancient stone huts, built upon a small hill, that must have belonged to a former race, and close to a dried up river. Some of the stones are six feet in length, two feet wide, and one and a half thick. They were placed on end and covered in. None of them would hold more than four persons. They are in small clusters of seven and eight together, and some less. They were covered in with large stones, that have long since fallen. No account can

be obtained of them from the Bushmen. Their huts are a few sticks stuck up with grass thrown over.

Several fresh Bushmen and women came to my camp this morning. Some of the young girls were very good-looking, and with a profusion of native ornaments upon them made entirely of ostrich eggs. A perfect set comprised a tiara, three inches in width, for the head; a broad necklace, six bracelets on each arm, and eight anklets or bangles to each leg, and finally, a rope of beads of sufficient length to go round the loins twice and fastened in front with a piece of rimpey. These constituted the entire dress of one of the girls. She looked like a young African queen, and it had the effect of making her look half pretty.

I bought two sets for six yards of print each. I think there cannot be less than 8000 beads in each set, between each bead a piece of leather of the same size, which becomes black, so that they look like black and white beads, which has a good effect upon their black skin. They were delighted with the exchange. When disrobed of their ornaments, they threw the print over their shoulders like a mantle. The ornament had the appearance of having been handed down from generation to generation. At Narukus, on the Nosop river, I came upon a family of Bushmen, ten in number, of a different type to those I had in my service, evidently a lower caste. They have no forehead, the wool on their heads comes close down to the eyes, and the head

falling back like the baboon; projecting mouth, small nose, a sort of hair or wool all over the chest, arms, and legs; their eyes are small and restless, watching every movement that is going on; the tallest man did not exceed four feet four; their skin was of a reddish-brown. A few old skins, broken ostrich eggs, and bows and arrows, seemed all they possessed of worldly goods.

. They would have decamped and hid in the bush, but I sent some of my Bushmen and brought them back. I asked my own boys, if they were their brothers, meaning of the same race; they repudiated the idea, and said they were monkeys not men, and told me there were very few ever seen, it was very seldom they ever came upon any; they eat carrion. They are evidently a distinct race from the Masara Bushmen who are largely distributed over the desert. One of the women had a baby not much bigger than a half-grown kitten; all of them were destitute of clothing.

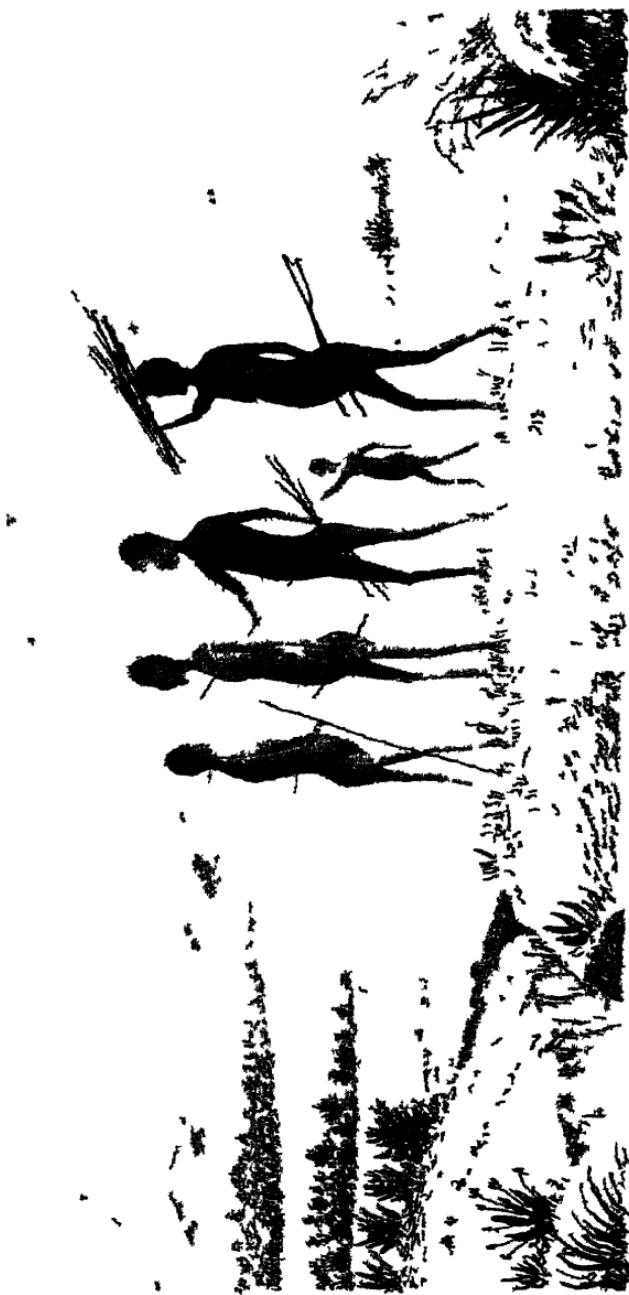
The country through which the Oup and Nosop pass, in many places is very pretty and picturesque. At a fountain on the branch of the Oup, I remained several days to hunt, to supply so many people with food.

*24th February, 1873.*—A terrific thunderstorm broke over us soon after midnight, and continued until six this morning, striking and splitting up some large

trees a short distance from our camp, and it rent into three a large rock which stood out alone from the base of the hill. The country was swamped with water, the oxen at one time standing half knee-deep in it. My escort of Bushmen and their families for once in their lives had a good shower-bath. The baboons also in the hills must have felt its effects, for they could be heard far and near, with their half-human grunts.

My Bushman with the stump foot told me he could understand the baboon language, when they are frightened or hungry, or are to meet together to defend themselves against an enemy, or to meet to play, and he knew well what they said and could talk to them. The old ones beat the young baboons with sticks if they do anything wrong, such as stealing the food from others. The Bushman's language has a great many grunts in it similar to these animals.

I find there are four types of Bushmen in this desert ; the lowest is the one already described with no forehead and half wool and hair on their bodies and legs. The second is the wild Bushmen, who live in the mountains near the Orange river, also mentioned, who war on all men, but they are of good form, without hair. The third is the Masara Bush family, also of good proportions and of gentle dispositions, inoffensive and harmless, ready to help or do anything, and they make good servants. It was this tribe I had with



A SMALL BUSHMAN FAMILY



me in my wanderings. The two girls I took in charge, made good cooks, washed the clothes, and mended them. The fourth is much taller and well-formed, great rascals, who cannot be trusted with anything ; they inhabit the eastern portion of the desert, and down by Langberg. A similar tribe were those Sir Walter Currie drove out of the colony, some of whom I fell in with at Quassam under Coche Africanda. The Bushmen of the northern Kalahara are much the same as the Masara, every one of them quite distinct from the Drakensberg Bushmen, whose form and colour differ entirely from the others, which I believe to be a distinct race, and which I described in the first chapter.

One amusing circumstance I omitted to mention in connection with one of these wild Bushman boys, when at Swaart-Modder in the Hygap river, where we had built a stone house under the cliff to keep our goods during our stay there. A young Bush boy came in the evening to the camp and made himself comfortable by the fire. After some time my boys asked him where he came from, but he would give no reply. At last they got from him that he had run away from his people, because his mother had burnt his fingers for stealing, and he came to get something to eat. This was his second visit, and as he had been well fed before, he came again, but managed at the same time to steal some of my

boys' food. On this evening, we had a young man from the colony to drive the cart and look after the boys, and as our stone house was infested with large mice, this young Hancock was catching them in an iron pot, and throwing them out amongst the boys for amusement. As one by one, up to seven, were thrown, this Bush boy picked them up, put them into the red-hot ashes to cook, and, when half-done, ate them as they were. Thinking he must be awfully hungry, I told my cook to put on a pot and cook some Boer meal, which is wheat ground but unsifted ; two pints of this were cooked in water, and when ready it was set before him, and soon disposed of.

After all the people were asleep, he stole the food they had left, and in the middle of the night, sucked three of my goats dry. The following morning he was not to be found, and for nearly a month we did not see him again ; when we had travelled 100 miles north, and were outspanned, he presented himself again, as if it were his first visit. We found out he had lived in the bush, existing on a wild water-melon, called shama or kongive, and had kept us in sight as we travelled. I tried to tame him, but it was of no use ; his age was about eleven years. He kept with us off and on for three months, then disappeared altogether ; the lions would not let him remain long, without making a meal of him.

We were now travelling through a very pretty part

of the desert, open glades and timber-trees, lofty pyramidal hills, partly covered with bush, fine grass, with white feathery tops, no inhabitants ; a wild and picturesque region, crossing open plains, then gentle rises with low bush ; in the distance, mountains with their lofty peaks fading away into nothing. The perfect calm and silence that pervades everything around, the variety of game quietly grazing in all directions, the very loneliness of my position, being many hundred miles from any white man, surrounded only by my own Bushmen, and those who accompany me, living in all their natural innocence as their fore-fathers lived in prehistoric ages, add immensely to the pleasure one feels in viewing a scene so novel and so seldom to be enjoyed.

The country as we approach Damaraland, becomes more wild and broken, lofty mountains come into view as we advance westward. We were nightly visited by lions and wolves, which kept us constantly on the watch, and our fires kept lighted. It is an anxious time, particularly when in the stillness of the night we hear their roar at no great distance, in answer to others far away. The roar of a lion in the still evening can be heard miles away.

One morning about eleven o'clock, as we were outspanned in an open plain about 300 yards from a small pool of water, our oxen, horse, and a few goats grazing on the opposite side of the waggons, several

of my boys asleep, the Bushmen and the women cooking some flesh in the hot embers, we saw seven lions leisurely walking up to the water. After drinking, they went to a small rise, bare of grass and sandy, and commenced playing, some lying down, others jumping over them, growling in their deep bass voice, acting the same as cats at play. This lasted twenty minutes, when they as leisurely walked away, taking no notice of us whatever. If I had fired and wounded any, they might have come at us, which would have been dangerous to our oxen, by dispersing. When an ox or a horse smells a lion, they will bolt away anywhere, and some might have been lost, therefore we left them alone and enjoyed so unusual a sight, watching the movements of these beautiful but dangerous kings of the forest, in their wild and natural state in the wilds of Africa.

The Kalahara, that portion, on the borders of Damara and Ovampo lands for 300 miles, becomes much more densely wooded and hilly. Some of the mountains attain a height of 8000 feet, in which lead, copper, iron, and coal, also limestone, both white and dark grey, crop up everywhere. Granite forms the hills. The Black and White Nosop and the Elephant river, and their several branches, drain all this region. The country is very dry, rain seldom falls, and when it does, it comes down with a rush, which soon passes away; but the vegetation is excellent, fine timber and

thick bush predominate over this vast but little inhabited country. The road from Walfish Bay on the west coast passes through, in an easterly direction, to Lake N'gami, Zambese, Ba-Mangwato, and other territories on the east. The road is difficult to travel for want of water, but when the country is more opened up, means will be found for procuring it by well-sinking and pumps, to make it as easy to travel as any part of Africa. There are several permanent watering-places now along this route. In the dry season it is three and four days' trek between them, but as it is limestone nearly all the way, water can be procured by digging wells. The country is subject to drought, more particularly in the southern portion of the desert, consequently there is more game to be found in the northern region. Elephants are seen in troops of two or three hundred, also the zebra, and the various antelopes, giraffes, rhinoceros, wild boar, and others.

The country is very favourable for rearing cattle; large numbers of horses are yearly taken through the desert from the Orange River Free State to Damaraland, and exchanged for Damara oxen, which are found to make the best trek oxen, having small hoofs and being nimble on their feet; they are compact and strong. Another advantage is that they are bred on sour grass; when they arrive in the colony it is sweet, which improves their condition.

April 30th.—At Omdra, a lovely, calm morning, after a heavy rain last night, at a vlei; there are several large ones in this open grass country that contain water at this time of year, being the rainy season. This station is on the desert-track from the lake to Ovampoland.

Outspanned under a large tree; boys employed skinning a koodoo, killed early this morning by one of my Bushmen guides with his poisoned arrow. The arrow-head is of bone, very small, the shaft two feet in length, and the bow two feet six inches. The shaft, close to the head for four inches, is covered over with their poison, which, in penetrating the flesh, paralyzes the animal; the flesh killed in this manner is very good, and has no bad effect on those who partake of it. Several Bush people have come to our camp begging for food; they look poor and miserable, their only covering being a few pieces of ragged skins thrown over their shoulders. Several of the grown-up boys and girls had not even that to cover them. They are complete wanderers in the desert; no home or fixed abode, but live on roots, berries, insects, and anything they may by chance shoot: I gave them some flesh, and a fire to cook it.

The hot winds, which are very oppressive, come in waves, and are very enervating, more particularly in the dry season, when they dry up everything. The wood-work of the waggons shrinks to such an extent,

that the wheels are kept together by ropes of raw hide bound round them; and your own system becomes so dried up, that the natural functions of your body partly cease to act; to remedy this, fat is absolutely necessary, and nature craves after it. You will see the desire after fat in the native tribes, not only to grease their skin, to protect it from the sun, but to use as medicine.

When trekking, some days afterwards, we were overtaken by one of those gigantic whirlwinds so common in all tropical countries. We were entirely enveloped in it; everything that is loose in the way of clothes is carried up hundreds of yards. One of my boys had his hat taken by the current, and it fell nearly a quarter of a mile from where he lost it. Many of these whirlwinds may be seen at one time passing over the desert.

At this outspan, late in the afternoon, sitting on my camp-stool where my boys were skinning a buffalo I had shot, I saw in the distance a Bushman coming. When near enough to distinguish, I saw it was a Bush girl, tall and well made, and for a wonder quite fat; she was marked over every part of her body—face, legs, and arms—with white stripes, like the stripes of the zebra, and had nothing else on. She came up, holding out an old piece of leopard-skin. My Bushmen spoke to her, but could get no answer. I gave her some tobacco, when, dropping

the skin, she walked to the fire and sat down. We gave her a piece of cooked meat, thinking she might be hungry, which she took, and after remaining some ten minutes, got up and walked away in the same direction she came; but no word could we get from her. She was even strange to my Bushman. It was a strange visit, and a strange mode of decorating herself. The only other occasion on which I fell in with Bushmen so marked was more to the east, nearly 300 miles, when nearly a dozen came to my waggon, to tell me I had that day ridden over a grave where a few days before they had buried one of their people. The stripes may have something to do with death, but the Bushmen I have spoken to know nothing of such custom.

One of the vleis, which was full of water, appeared to be full of frogs, from the noise they made at night; going down, next morning, I found several small ones, having a peculiar appearance. Catching one, which was very narrow in its body compared to its length, and having a short tail, I concluded at once from its general shape that it was half-lizard and half-frog. It had all the action of the frog in its long leaps, without any attempt at running; all the others were of the same form, and with tails. I brought it to the waggon to take its measure, viz. from front of head to commencement of tail one and a half inch, length of tail three-quarters of an inch, beautifully marked

with green and light-yellow spots. Not having any means of preserving it, I took it back to the vlei, where there were hundreds sitting on the bank ; as I neared them they jumped into the water and disappeared. The Bushman brought in to-day several ostrich-eggs, quite fresh from the nest, which we had cooked in our large iron pots, mixed with a little flour—a kind of omelet ; one is sufficient for three persons. The Bushman took me to a nest that the old birds had been sitting on for some time ; there were eighteen in the centre, and fourteen on the outside, formed into a circle round them, which are kept for food for the young birds, which lasts them a few days when hatched ; the hen bird then takes and teaches the chicks to eat grass.

*Thursday, 18th.*—Our camp was visited by a party of traders and Korannas on their way from Meer down South—the chief Puffadder, old Mr. Ryland, from Kopie's farm and Low Blaat, four waggons, and a lot of cattle, horses, and sheep. They remained the afternoon and night, and started early the next day for Kebeum. They told me a trader on the border of Great Namaqualand, going down to Walfish Bay, had been shot, and his waggon and everything seized by the Gobabis Hottentots for plunder, and that the country was in a fearful state of tribal wars. I told them of my little affair with the Bushman Hottentot at Quassam ; they said I was most fortunate to

escape as I did, particularly with all my belongings, as they are noted as a nest of thieves, and have robbed traders of everything.

I left them for Abequis pits, which are in limestone ; it is a Koranna station, under the chief Puffadder. The country is open and flat ; the grass in many places was up to my chin with white feathery flowers ; at a distance it looks like snow. The road is very good for waggon travelling, and around Springbok fountain the scenery is very pretty. At Abequis pits the Korannas have many huts, and seem to be doing well ; they have flocks of goats, and a few Africander sheep. They brought me some very good feathers, which I took in exchange for powder and caps ; many of them have the old flint gun, which would be a curiosity now in England.

The winters here are warm ; it is now mid-winter, thermometer in the shade 68°. The men wear old leather trousers, which constitute their dress, the women an old blanket thrown over the left shoulder, and brought round and held in front by the hand. Over-modesty is not a failing with them. They were very civil, supplied my people with goats' milk, and I gave them what they much needed, tobacco, as the women are great smokers. Dozens of them will sit or be lying round my fire, having only two or three bone pipes between them, each taking a few puffs and passing it on to the next, until all have had a turn ;

then they begin again, the old ones keeping a pipe to themselves. My maids, Topsey and Nina, the daughters of my Piet, knew these people, therefore I got on very well, Piet also lived once with them. The country towards the south and west was a level plain as far as the eye could see.

The next morning after the second day, started to the northwards; we passed a large vlei on the left, six miles from the Koranna station, which is the commencement of the sand-dunes. The dunes are small until sixteen miles of country are passed, then they assume great proportions. A mile to the left is another vlei, where we filled our water-casks and gave the oxen water, and remained the night, to have a clear day to pass over them. There were three Griquas' waggons outspanned, each waggon was full of women and children, each Jack had his Jill, and each a baby, plenty of little naked children of both sexes. They told me they were on the trek to the Orange river. These people are always quiet and civil, they exchanged a fat sheep for some tobacco. All the country, including the sand-dunes, is limestone with sand above, and full of low bush, many large and small land-shells are mixed up in the sand.

*July 17th.*—The Griquas left early in the morning, and we started to cross the sand-dunes. A fearful road, their sides are about at an angle of thirty, and every time we ascend one, we have to put two spans

of twenty-eight oxen in, to pull one waggon up at a time, which causes much delay shifting them backwards and forwards, as each dune rises from 150 to 200 feet in height, with deep sand in the road, the wheels sinking nine inches into it. After struggling over these for five hours, the oxen were done up, and we outspanned for the day at another large dry vlei, but on the bank a small spring of water was issuing, sufficient for the oxen and ourselves, a grand discovery, as we did not expect to find any until we had got clear of this heavy road. A short distance from the water were several families of Bushmen, sitting round a large fire ; some of them had most extraordinary figures, thin calfless legs, prominent chests and abdomen, altogether different from the other Bushmen of the desert, and the colour of their skin was much lighter. A thin band of leather round their loins, and a skin over their shoulders was their only covering ; long bundles of skins rolled up with several spears were lying on the ground. The food they live on in a great measure gives them this peculiar formation. They had the short bow and arrow, and quivers made of skins, full of arrows, cleverly made with bone heads, all smeared with poison. They appear to be half-Bushman, half-Koranna.

I started the next morning, and after toiling for several hours, rested, and again went on, crossing those lofty ridges until dark, outspanned for the

night in a deep hollow, where there was plenty of good grass, and trees, and dead wood for fire. Our trek this day was about eight miles ; two great fires were made, and our little party of twenty-six all told, made themselves comfortable over their supper, and at ten all were fast asleep. But we did not get much rest, the lions kept round the camp making a great noise, and being surrounded by these hills and thick bush, we were the greater part of the night obliged to keep a sharp look-out that none of our animals were taken. Early the next morning I took my rifle and mounted one of these sand-dunes before inspanning, and found from the base to the summit registered 204 feet. But what a sight when I looked round ; as far as the eye could see, nothing but these immense sand-dunes in every direction, here and there open patches of yellow sand and bush, a wild, rugged, and howling wilderness, that appeared interminable, the fit abode for savage man and more savage beast, and here we find them, man in primitive nature, as low a type as the world can produce, little removed from the beast, for it is here I have met those wild men which I have described elsewhere ; they are partly covered with short woolly hair, and have no forehead, the scant wool reaching the eyes. They are rarely now seen, even by the Bushmen of the desert, as they have repeatedly told me, and here they may find a home for many

years to come, for no other living man will fix his residence in such a region of desolation,—

“A wilderness howling and drear,  
Forsaken by man from famine or fear.”

*Pringle.*

On our trek we started many head of game, which are easily killed by the Bushman arrow, and with these and the many wild fruits they manage to exist. It has taken four days to cross this wild and hilly region which extends over an area as far as I have explored it, fifty miles from east to west, and nearly forty north to south : the home of the leopard and a legion of wild tiger-cats, that are spotted or striped,— their skins make beautiful karoses. On leaving these dunes we come upon a level plain of limestone, which we have ten miles to cross, where there are several watering-places, fountains they may be called, and enter sand-dunes again for some fifteen miles, and then come upon a bush country, with gentle rises and low wooded hills with isolated conical hills of granite. Close to the hills, I outspanned near a swamp ; the noise from the bull-frog kept us from sleep. They are monsters, a foot across the back and quite black. The Bushmen eat them ; they would form a fine dish for our French neighbours.

The weather is very fine, like an English spring day, everything seems springing into life. Clouds begin to

collect on the horizon, and the sunsets are most brilliant, purple and gold, forming celestial landscapes of the most gorgeous hues. There are many ostriches to be seen on the flats, but the country is so full of holes, partly covered with grass, that it is dangerous to follow them. Far and wide in every direction the character of the country is the same, which we pass through up to Meer, the Bastard station.

We passed several small Bushmen kraals ; the women and children as we approached hid themselves in the bush, but when they found we were friendly, and giving presents to the men, they came forward. At one we remained a few days to buy feathers, during the time my Bushmen and the girls soon made friends with them, and dancing went on in their fashion every evening. These women daub their faces and bodies with black stripes, which they consider ornamental. Their natural colour is half black, consequently these stripes show out prominently ; they are a mild, timid race, very good-natured, willing to do anything, and, if left alone by the border tribes and the Bastards, their lives would be happy ; their wants are few and easily supplied, clothes they do not require, the climate at all seasons of the year is seldom colder than our English summer, and, as these children of the desert are constantly shifting their locations, huts are not required, or only of the most primitive kind, a few sticks stuck in the ground, and the long grass

thrown over them. This is a portion of the central part of the Kalahara.

When we arrived at Meer, all the people were out ostrich-hunting close round the village, a great excitement, the birds running in all directions, and the Bastards after them on their horses ; they managed to shoot seven, the others, about fifty, made their escape.

Meer is a straggling village, the soil is rich and grows good crops of corn, the two pans supply the people with water. Dirk Falander, the head-man, is supreme over the people. They possess several waggons and have large herds of cattle, and live very comfortably, sending down to the colony for what supplies they require. Coffee and sugar are in great demand.

After a delay of two days, I left for Chuane pits, distant one hundred miles ; as the rains were very early, there was plenty of water to be had. This occupied me eleven days. I remained some time on the Oup and Nosop rivers, hunting, and it was necessary for one or two guns to be out every day to supply my little family with food, and as there was plenty of large game about, we had no difficulty in procuring it.

The wild aspect of the country, bush here, open plains there, with long ridges of low hills, no living soul to be seen until we arrived at the pits, and there we found a small family, who on our approach ran into

the bush, but my own Bushmen called them back ; they came very reluctantly, but soon became friends, some fifteen in all, a little dahka and a few beads as presents soon restored confidence amongst them.

I am much interested in the Bushmen of the desert, and also in the white Bushmen of the Drakensberg mountains, because they appear from their isolation from the outer world, and cut off as they have been from the tribes that now occupy the regions around them, to be the descendants of the people who occupied the lower end of this ancient continent before the tribes from the north came down, and pushed their way south, bringing with them their Asiatic and Hebrew customs, which all without exception now practise more or less, evidently proving from what regions they had migrated. Eventually they nearly penetrated to Cape Town. Not so with the white Bushmen of the Drakensberg, the Hottentots, or Bushmen of Cape Colony, and the Bushmen of the Kalahara Desert, each retaining up to the present time distinctive physical formations and distinctive dialects, so entirely different from those tribes that come down south and overrun the southern peninsula of the African continent. These ancient aborigines of South Africa are comparatively pigmy races to those above referred to, who are as tall, robust, well-formed specimens of the human race as can be found in any part of the world. Then again their language,

if it can be called such, is entirely different from any other known tongue, their thoughts are described by certain clicks, four in number, the white Bushmen of the Drakensberg have only these clicks, the Hottentots or Bushmen of the Cape have, in addition to the clicks, sounds which accompany the clicks which come from the throat like grunts. The Bushmen of the desert have also these clicks, showing, I think conclusively, that these early people were in existence before languages,—what we understand by language, words formed by the mouth, tongue, and lips, as the nations of the world now converse and talk. Some of the South African missionaries have committed to paper these clicks, and they state it is a most beautiful and expressive language. At any rate, my belief is, that the earliest formed language of man was by sounds such as clicks and grunts before they advanced so far as to express their ideas by forming words, and language has been progressive as man advanced in civilization. In travelling over South Africa and listening to the sounds of the baboons as they move about the rocks above you, you can detect a great similarity in their guttural sounds and the Bushman language, and I could quite understand when my Bushman told me he could converse with, and knew much of what these said, showing a connecting link between them. Therefore I take much interest in watching their characteristic qualities, in connection

with the general run of mankind. Anthropological study naturally embraces the study of their early implements, where, and how found, their artistic qualities, and for what purpose made, for peace or war, and this desert is particularly rich in these interesting relics of past ages.

The desert on the east and south of these Chuana pits, extends up to the chiefs Sechele, Montsioa, and Gaseitive, that join on the eastern boundary 230 miles, unbroken by rivers or native towns, one immense tract of wood and plains, long flats, and in other parts undulating, with the exception of the detached mountain ranges, which run north and south—the continuation of the Langberg range—and they terminate 100 miles south of Lake N'gami. They are beautiful, picturesque and lofty hills, rising from their base 3000 feet; many of their sides and deep kloofs are thickly wooded with fine timber of great value, and in the extensive ravines are ancient caves, some of them now used by the Bushman tribe. This range is distant from these pits about twenty miles on the east. Game of every kind is plentiful; lions, also, we hear for hours every evening. Hawks, kites, vultures, eagles, locust-birds are almost always seen on the wing.

As there was good water at these pits, in consequence of several heavy thunderstorms having passed over the last few days, I have remained here to have a little exploration of the country and provide a good

supply of dried meat, which is called biltong, for my people ; and in the evenings, when all work is over, they amuse themselves dancing, singing, and shooting at targets with their arrows for small presents, which causes great fun ; they are the most happy people in the world. To amuse them I made a kite about three feet in length, and with some string sent it flying, to the astonishment and delight of all.

Spring was now advancing fast, everything springing into life. The little, happy African lark flying up some thirty feet, where it remains a few seconds, then down it comes with such a sweet plaintive voice, and this is repeated every few minutes, and as there are many of them about, their little notes are constantly heard. Thunderstorms are now coming almost daily, and the evening sunsets are the most brilliant and gorgeous that can be imagined, portraying golden lakes, mountains and waterfalls, rivers and islands, with noble castles, and everything to perfect a landscape, and this remains long without alteration. It has been a source of much pleasure in this lonely region to endeavour to convey the like on canvas.

As we had now plenty of water and could go anywhere, I struck north, leaving these pits on the 30th October ; but a few days previous to my leaving, I found several small quartz reefs of the right sort for gold. After spending three days with pickaxe and hammer, digging and breaking off nearly a ton of

quartz, I was rewarded with one little speck of gold, finding, so far as I could see, that these reefs were not rich; and if they were, the distance is too great to make it pay to work them. On leaving, my friends, whom I found in possession of the pits, wanted to join my party. Treking due north, keeping west of these mountains, I outspanned, after four hours, close to one of the highest of the range for the night, as I wanted to make an excursion to the top the next day, to see the country and take observations, altitude, and get the difference in temperature at the highest part. The night passed off very quietly, except hearing in the stillness of the night an occasional roar of a lion and other wild beasts, to give us warning not to sleep too sound. The sun rose the next morning in a magnificent glow of crimson light. After breakfast I started with my driver and five Bushmen, each with a rifle and ammunition, all on foot, leaving the waggon at 6 a.m. I soon reached the foot of the mountain, when the difficult part of the journey commenced, passing round projecting rocks, crossing deep kloofs, thick with bush, where we had to keep a good look-out, having only one dog to tell if any lions were near. I managed, after three hours' labour, to reach the highest summit about 10 a.m., a clear lovely morning, without a cloud. The view from this elevated position was grand. In all my wanderings I have never seen anything to equal it, no lofty hills to break the view

for 150 miles. The outlook from this point extended both east and west over 200 miles ; the lofty hills near Secheles could only be distinguished with the telescope, and then like a pale lavender cloud, the country between thickly wooded, and long stretches of open country, apparently a waterless region ; the same on the western side, excepting that the country was more open, and the ancient river system could be distinctly traced by the trees and bushes that grew on their banks. The game in the open looked like ants. One of my Bushmen called the attention of the others to something they went to look at behind some bushes. Going to see what they were examining, I found the remains of four fires that had recently been alight, and several pieces of bone broken near some stones to extract the marrow, but nothing else could be discovered. Evidently there were Bushmen in these mountains, but no sign of them could we see. After exploring the ins and outs of the topmost ridges, I selected a good position for taking observation, after which we disposed ourselves for lunch ; the walk up and pure air gave an edge to our appetites. Cold tea and a dash of brandy, which gives the tea the flavour of wine, was served to all alike, and they then disposed themselves on the grass for a smoke. I found the elevation at this point above sea-level to be 6470 feet, and from the base of the mountain to where we were 2795 feet.

At 3 p.m. we made a start for the return journey to camp, taking a different route down, which was much more difficult, the mountain being broken up into many almost perpendicular ravines, and gigantic rocks projecting in all directions. Half-way down my Bushmen called out in an excited tone that there were several Bushmen on a projecting spur making for cover. We counted eleven; how many more we could not tell. I told my boys to call to them to come, but they paid no attention, and suggested that some should go and bring them, but they refused, being afraid they should be shot by the poisoned arrows; and they informed me they were monkeys, not men, meaning they were of the same type as those I have mentioned previously as having woolly hair on their body, legs, and arms. As we wound round the mountain, it being too steep to come straight, we came suddenly upon three more, a man, a woman and child, quite naked, and of a reddish-brown colour. My Bushmen called to them in their language of clicks to stop, we were friends, but they seemed much alarmed. A present of beads to the woman gave them confidence. They appeared very young, not more than seventeen. The height of the man was about four feet two inches, large bodies for their size, thin legs, and small receding head, and disgustingly ugly.

Passing round one of the overhanging rocks, I came upon several caves, none of any great extent, but

evidently made use of as dwellings from the numerous remains of fires in them and the smoked appearance of the roofs and sides, and heaps of broken bones lying about, but no one was in them. If I had had the means of sending this little family down to the colony, I should have done so. After a delay of nearly an hour looking about, we continued our downward movements, and reached camp soon after sundown.

During our absence one of our Bush girls went out with two other little ones to dig up inches, a small bulb growing in the veldt—good to eat—when a lion seized and carried her off. The screams of the girl and the two little ones brought several of the Bushmen with guns, but no trace of the girl could be found. This occurred just before our arrival, when I formed a party of seven and went to look for her, but night coming on and very dark, it was impossible to follow up the spoor. Early next morning by break of day all that could be spared started, but nothing could be seen, the bush being so thick. Many of the Bush people are carried off in this way. All last night the roar at intervals could be heard far and near; the man-eating lions are the only ones these people greatly fear.

To go through my daily routine from place to place, the same duty daily, would become too tedious. We therefore, after leaving this place, visited various

localities. My Bushmen knew that water could be found at Hoodedoon, and the dry river where we managed to capsize the waggon. We reached Reitfontain and Wahlberg, my old station, at a pan situated at the north end of that mountain range I had left five weeks back, and encamped once more for a rest. I call this my station in 22° 10' S. lat., 22° 12' E. long. The whole of the country is high, 3880; at my pan the mountain registers 6880 above sea-level. After a stay of ten days I left for Lake N'gami.

The importance of this desert cannot be overestimated in connection with our interior trade. Whatever nation secures it, secures all the trade to the Zambese, which would be an immense loss to England and the Cape Colony. It is capable of great improvement, and under a proper government will become a most valuable field for emigration.

END OF VOL. I.



